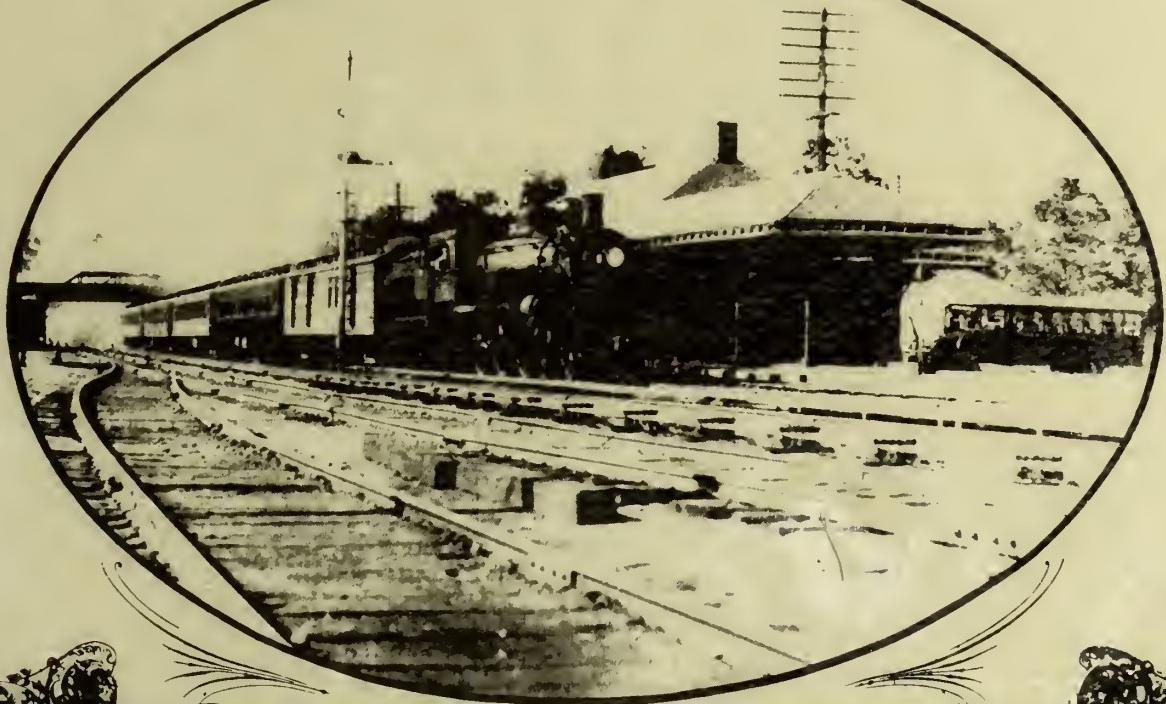


A HISTORY OF



Canton Junction

By Edward D. Galvin

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A HISTORY OF Canton Junction



By Edward D. Galvin

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To my great-great grandfather, John O'Neill
and his fellow Irish Navvies, whose strength, hard work, and humor
built the railroad through Canton.



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

In May 1909, the properties of the Revere Copper Works and Kinsley Iron and Machine Company (KIM) were auctioned. My mother's uncle, Charlie Grimes, a local entrepreneur, shrewdly purchased buildings and land that abutted Ames Avenue from KIM. One of the parcels purchased, identified on the map of the properties as lot no. 6 cottage, was located adjacent to where the KIM rail spur joined the Stoughton Branch of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad. Charlie Grimes' purchase in 1909 of no. 6 cottage is one of the reasons you are reading this book as I was raised in that cottage. I grew up thinking that I was especially fortunate to have parents thoughtful enough to live right next to the Railroad where as a child I was entertained by the comings and goings on the Stoughton Branch.

Living alongside the Stoughton Branch impacted me as a youngster in the 1940's with its diverse activity. I watched as Brill Car 9105 shuttled back and forth between Canton Junction and North Easton sounding its distinctive whistle as it approached Washington Street. These trips were occasionally interrupted by steam locomotives pulling freight trains.

My parents told me that years ago the tracks went right past the front of the house to serve the KIM. This drove me into a frenzy of searching for the tracks resulting in my digging up a rusty spike or two. Years later, my own sons, dug up a part of my Aunt's lawn in a similar quest based on my stories.

As I grew a bit older, I became interested in the industries that were served by these railroad tracks. Twenty years later, I discovered that my interests fell into the newly developing academic field called Industrial Archaeology. Canton is rich in Industrial Archaeology sites from its nationally known Viaduct to tell-tale stone walls that bound old industrial rail spurs.

My family history also stimulated my interest in these areas. My paternal grandfather was a conductor on the Blue Hill Street Railway up to the time of its demise in 1920. Patrick Grimes, my great-grandfather worked for the Revere Copper Company from 1847 until the time of its closing in 1899. It was during the course of my research that I uncovered the lost fact that my great-great grandfather John O'Neill was one of the Irish laborers who built the Viaduct and settled in Canton as an employee of the Boston and Providence Railroad.

I feel I have an obligation to document their achievements.

E.D. Galvin
Brunswick, Maine
March 1987

PREFACE

This book is a history of the railroad in Canton, Massachusetts. It traces the railroad from its construction in the early 1830's to the present day. The railroad's impact on the community, its industries and inhabitants is measured and detailed.

During the early years, the railroad was the town's vital link to distant markets and sources of raw material. The railroad allowed Canton's townspeople to travel not only to Boston, but the rest of Southeastern Massachusetts. In time though, the railroad was regarded as merely a nuisance, one that blocked local roads and occasionally killed or maimed people who strayed onto its right-of-way. Recently, another cycle of the railroad's history has emerged. The virtual rebirth of commuter rail service over the past ten years is recognized as an important asset to the town and a reason Canton is a desirable place to live.

The book is intended to serve those who are interested not only in the town's history, but in the evolution of the railroad in the past 150 years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

One of the great pleasures of writing a book of this nature is meeting and working with so many fine people. I was particularly fortunate to have the early support of Miss Margaret A. Doody who was for many years the Head Librarian of the Canton Public Library. Her early encouragement and assistance came at a critical time in the development of this work. The late John Wagner, a Canton photographer, donated his talent and time photocopying rare photographs that were available for a brief period of time. The late James E. Lee of Amherst, a skilled writer, critiqued the early drafts of this work. Jane Gilbert of Augusta, Maine worked many hours on my behalf with the graphic sections.

A large number of photographs were provided by Norton D. Clark, "Skip" to everyone, from his priceless collection of Carlton Parker photographs. One only has to thumb through this book to see the importance of these photos to this work. Dealing with Skip and having the benefit of his collection and knowledge was nothing short of invaluable.

The New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association President Bill Dulmaine published this work in serial form in the *Shoreliner*, assisted by the knowledgeable rail historian C.A. "Charlie" Brown.

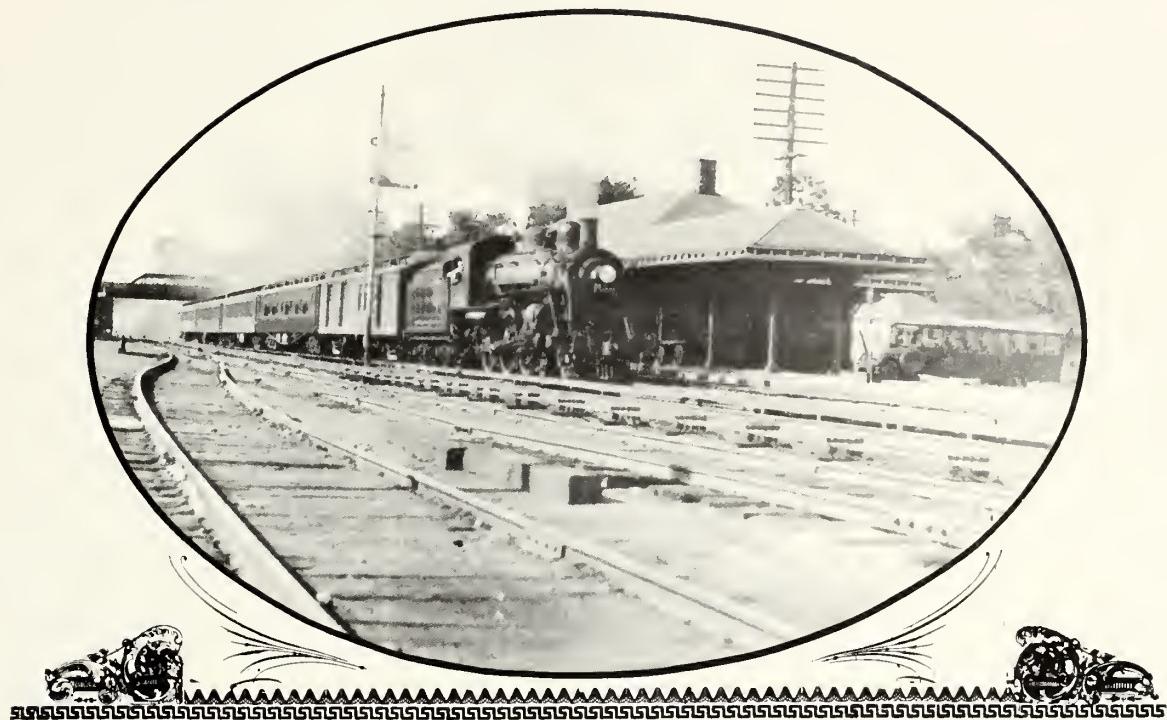
Joe Danahy of Canton. Only Joe would join me in spending hours puzzling over the questions that had they been left unanswered would have resulted in an incomplete work. Joe and I share an appreciation of Jacob Sillaway, Canton Junction's memorable Station Agent. Most of all, Joe always encouraged me to continue even when discouraged that this book would not become a reality. And finally, my family. In compiling this book, I have been late or on occasion missed family functions and I am sure I have tried everyone's patience, but no one ever complained about my obsession, not even Pam.

To all my sincere thanks.

Edward D. Galvin

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Canton Junction

It is one of the felicities of life to live on a great road. Dwellers on back streets, and at the extremity of private avenues miss many sights. Blessed is he — "beatus ille" — who dwells on a "great road." Nowadays, it must be a railroad perhaps, but it is good to have both country road and railroad. Nothing worth seeing escapes the vision then of a household. My boy knows the time of the "accommodation" train and freight trains and the New Bedford trains on the Boston and Providence Railroad as well, and can calculate their arrival and transit, as accurately as can Mr. Sillaway the attentive station agent, or his assistant the faithful Powers — and why not? They are of every day occurrence.

Norfolk County Gazette
June 1, 1872

From the column *Canton Correspondence* believed to have been written at this time by Samuel B. Noyes.

Chapter One

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1830-1840

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- | | |
|------|--|
| 1831 | Boston and Providence Railroad Company incorporated June 22, 1831 |
| 1834 | Foundation stone of Viaduct laid, April 20, 1834
Trains began operating between Boston and Canton, September 12, 1834 |
| 1835 | First regular passenger train crossed the Viaduct, July 28, 1835
B&P named one of its new locomotives "Canton" — purchased from Long and Norris |

Ten wheeler #805, built in 1904 for high speed passenger trains such as this 3:25 p.m. Boston to Newport train roaring past Canton Junction and down the branch, due at Newport at 5:32 p.m. Note the New England Transportation Company bus arriving at the station. Photo date July 5, 1926. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

1830 - 1840

Canton, Massachusetts had a population of 1,515 in 1830. These hardy inhabitants were to witness the first and, from a national standpoint, the most spectacular events ever to be undertaken in Canton. Due to a combination of geography and politics which will soon be explained, Canton was to be the location of a Viaduct that would enable Boston to be linked with Providence by railroad.

Much has been written about the Boston and Providence Railroad (B&P), and accounts dealing with its origin usually mention Canton's stone viaduct. While "the viaduct" has never been ignored, it has never been the subject of more than local attention, and then only when the early days of railroading are discussed. Yet, together with B&O's noted Thomas Viaduct, the Canton structure now stands as one of the oldest surviving multiple-arch stone railroad bridges in the U.S. Furthermore, its design and history make it unique in its own right.

Before the B&P's incorporation on June 22, 1831, several preliminary surveys were conducted in order to find the best possible route between the two cities. It was not lost upon the people of 1830 that the presence of a rail line passing through their town or village would help relieve the unending problem of transporting people and goods. By the time the company was formally incorporated, the surveyors were well along with their task, and in a matter of weeks a decision as to the planned route was expected.¹ Although the Corporation had until January of 1834 to file the location of the road, and until January 1, 1837 to complete it, it was eager to begin construction.

The company's directors were confronted with the fact that both Boston and Providence lay in geologic depressions. These were separated by a ridge which had its highest point in Sharon, roughly midway between the two terminals. The Neponset River with its extensive flood plain and valley lay to the north of the high ground between the two cities. With an uncommon foresight, the directors agreed that the route of the road should be as short and as straight as possible — even if this meant bypassing such established towns as Dedham and cutting through a cemetery in Attleboro.²

As a result, the company decided that the assault upon the Sharon hill would be made from the eastern edge of the Neponset Valley, passing close to Canton. While perhaps shorter, it had some drawbacks: a westerly approach to Sharon hill would have taken the road through Dedham, with a more gentle ascent of the hill, and the Sharon

route required several cuts and many embankments. It also meant crossing the east branch of the Neponset River (then called the Canton River), which lay in a wide and relatively deep valley — a site so difficult that the company directors originally thought it would be necessary to use inclined planes on each side.

It should be recognized that, although the Canton route was unquestionably more difficult than one through Dedham, there were undoubtedly "other considerations." For example, one of the six members of the railroad's Board of Directors was Joseph Warren Revere, son of Paul Revere. In the later part of his life, Paul Revere had moved to Canton and established a copper works and brass foundry on the site of the Revolutionary War powder mill. The Revere Copper Works — now operated by Joseph W. Revere — lay within a quarter of a mile of the new railroad's route through Canton.³

Mercifully, the original idea of using inclined planes to get across the Neponset (Canton River) Valley was dropped. A fatal accident involving several well known businessmen had occurred on the Granite Railway at Quincy, Mass. — which used inclined planes — banishing all thought of inclines, and it was decided to build a stone viaduct over the valley instead. The firm of Dodd and Baldwin contracted to build the structure, according to specifications set down by the Boston & Providence's engineer:

It is understood that the said Viaduct shall commence at a point 10.5 feet northeast of station marked 670, of the center line of the Boston and Providence Railroad and extend 613.5 feet on said center line to a point three feet southwest of station marked 676, crossing the mill pond of the Stone Factory, so called: that the said Viaduct shall terminate at each end by an abutment and circular wing walls; that the basement wall shall, in every part be laid on a solid foundation — shall extend entirely across the base of the structure and project from one to two feet beyond the exterior face of the superstructure, as may be directed.

The said basement wall shall be constructed of the best dry masonry and the stone of such dimensions as shall be approved by the Agent or his assistant; the said basement wall shall in every part commence at least three feet below the surface of the earth except where solid rock shall be encountered, and shall be raised to such elevation as the Agent or his assistant may direct.

The superstructure shall consist

of two walls extending the entire length of the viaduct, connected at intervals of 27½ feet by buttress 5½ feet thick extending transversely across the walls, and projecting 4 feet beyond their faces. The main walls to be 4 feet thick, 4½ feet below the grade of the road, at all points, and to have a battre on their exterior faces of 1 foot in 48 feet, or 1 inch to 4 feet — the interior faces to be perpendicular, and to have a clear of 4 feet...

(Engineer's Report, June 1, 1834. Baker Library, Harvard Univ.)

Captain William Gibbs McNeill was hired and charged with the construction of the railroad. The foundation stone of the viaduct was laid on April 20, 1834, commencing an eventful two years of building. Construction of the railroad itself was started at both the Boston and Providence ends, working toward Canton.⁴ The viaduct proved to be the railroad's largest and most difficult project, and was the final link in connecting the two cities.

Initially, it was thought that a local quarry in Canton could provide all the necessary stone for the structure. As it turned out, however, the quarry — located near Dunbar Street in Canton — contained stone which was not suitable as finish stone, thus relegating it for use only in the foundation and for backing. This stone was drawn by oxen over a distance of more than two miles to the viaduct. It was necessary to obtain face stone from a quarry in Sharon, on the westerly slope of Rattlesnake Hill. From there, the stone was hauled over the road some three miles by oxen or horses to the railroad near what used to be Sharon Heights Station, then loaded on a flat car where it rolled downhill by gravity another four miles to the viaduct site. An elderly white horse named Charlie hauled the empty car back to Sharon when its load of granite had been removed.⁵

There were two distinct, major groups of men who built the viaduct: the stone cutters and masons — who were all Scotch — and those engaged in the rough stone laying and construction of the gravel roadbed — who were Irish. The Irishmen built their shacks at Dunbar's Ledge, about a mile and a half below Canton Junction, while the Scotchmen ate their porridge and drank their "barley beer" at Dunbar's quarry, previously mentioned, near the Canton-Sharon town line. The Irish, who have a tradition of discriminating tastes, drank a distilled product of rye. The local lore generated by events that accompanied the construction of the viaduct is substantiated by the fact that the militia had to be called on at least two occasions to settle riots between the two groups. Legend has it that the



So impressive was the Viaduct that the Boston and Providence used an engraving of the structure on its stock certificates. Courtesy Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

quarrels climaxed when one of the Irish leaders disappeared after one of the traditional Saturday evening brawls. It was never determined whether he had simply left town in disgust at the fighting or had been "done in" and was making his way to sea via the Neponset River.⁶

The Scotch artisans were Free Masons, and every faced stone on the exterior bears the mark of the man who cut it. The taste and ability of the workman is evidenced by its size, shape and style.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE VIADUCT

The foundations of the viaduct are some eight feet below the surface of the ground. Most of the interior of the viaduct is hollow, with the side walls giving the appearance of not being

joined together except for intervals of masonry. The exterior has pilasters connected at the top by segmental arches, with the top of the viaduct being finished the full width over the pilasters.

The bridge originally was planned for a single track. The top of the viaduct was rounded by ballast and the rails were placed on the crown.

The "Stone Bridge," as it was called, is 615 feet in length, 22 feet in width, and the rails are about 70 feet above the surface of the river. Originally, there was a single highway passage, a semi-circular arch 22 feet wide. Six rounded arches, of 8 feet 4 inches each, allow the river to pass through the viaduct. As the structure neared completion, a stone bearing the names of the railroad officials was set in the western end of the parapet. The inscription reads:

This viaduct erected by the
B&P R.R.

T.B. Wales, President
Directors: J.W. Revere
C.H. Russell, J.P. Loring
C. Potter, J.G. King

Years later, during the course of renovations, this stone was tossed off the viaduct and was left for a long while in a field below. Though broken, it was subsequently raised back to the top of the viaduct but placed on the Canton Junction end, where it rests today.⁷

The spanning of the vale was accomplished by means of earth embankment extending from a point just west of the present location of Canton Junction station to a point where the viaduct began. The embankment rose more than sixty feet above the natural terrain and it, together with the viaduct, significantly changed the landscape in the vicinity of Canton and Canton Junc-

tion. The homes of the townspeople of that day originally looked down a gently rolling slope to the Fowl Meadow, which separated the towns of Canton and Norwood. The newly-erected barrier would shut out, for ages to come, the magnificent view across the Neponset River Valley from some of the higher points in Canton.⁸

As additional sections of the Boston and Providence were completed, they were opened for traffic. The line started operations from Boston to a point in Dedham in August of 1834. On September 12, 1834, trains began running to the Canton viaduct building site, where passengers were transferred to horse-drawn coaches for the rest of the journey to Providence.

The locomotive "Whistler" hauled these early trains between Boston and Canton and, until the completion of the viaduct, this was the only steam-powered section of the Boston and Providence.⁹

Late in the spring of 1835, when the viaduct was nearing completion, the following article appeared in the June 6 *Providence Journal*:

Last Tuesday by invitation of the Directors we made, in company with a party of gentlemen, the first passage that has ever been made over the whole length of the Boston and Providence Railroad. It was in contemplation to have taken the new engine that had arrived from Philadelphia only the day before, but some of her pipes were not in order, and we finally set off from the depot on India Point at a quarter before one o'clock in the afternoon with two cars, each propelled by two horses. The application of the horses afforded us a most fortunate opportunity for inspecting the grand structure over which we passed. The road has been graduated in such a manner that the inclination is nowhere more than 37 feet to the mile, and it is for a short distance only, that it is anywhere sufficient to perceptibly retard the speed of the cars, and it is finished with a neatness very gratifying to the eye.

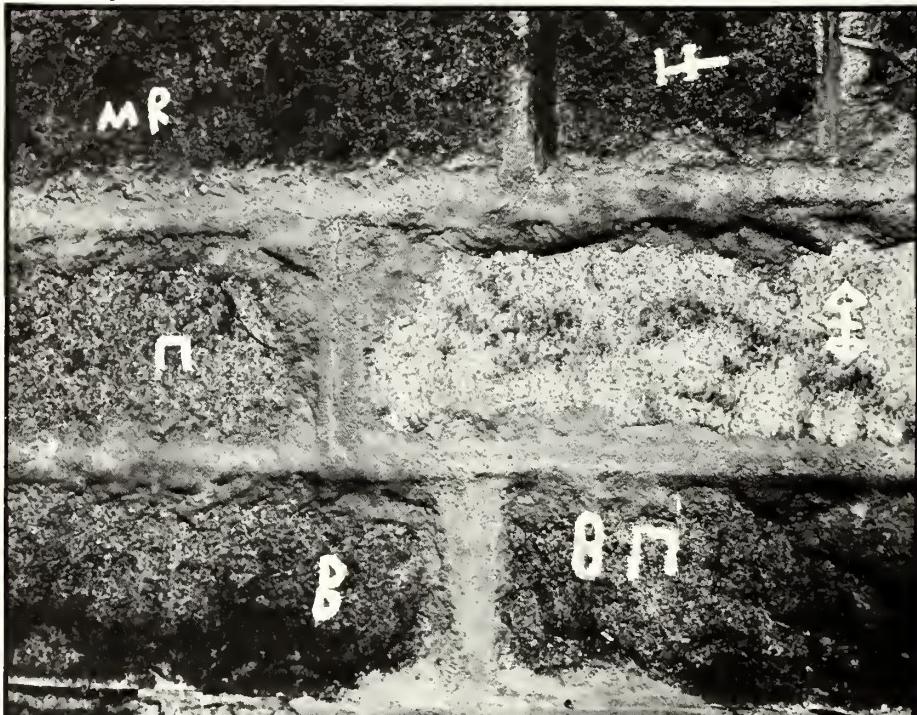
The Viaduct at Canton, though yet unfinished, is a stupendous work. A view of it, many times repays the trouble of passing round. The excavation and embankments in Canton are also worthy of minute attention; they testify in strong language to man's dominion over nature, and his ability to overcome any obstacle to any undertaking that is not morally or physically absurd. The project of cutting through these rocky heights and crossing the valley of the river by the Viaduct was a very bold one.



STONE CUTTERS MARKS CANTON VIADUCT

Above: Marks used by Scottish Free Masons on stones used in construction of Viaduct to identify who had cut what stone. Collection of Canton Historical Society.

Below: Actual marks found on stones highlighted with paint. Photo date April, 1973. Photo by Author.



A hesitating mind would have surmounted this by a stationary engine or some less formidable way. But any other would have detracted very much from the facilities which give value to such a road. The road has been constructed under the direction of Major McNeill, and it will stand for ages an enduring monument of the high talents and high attainments of its accomplished engineer. Among curiosi-

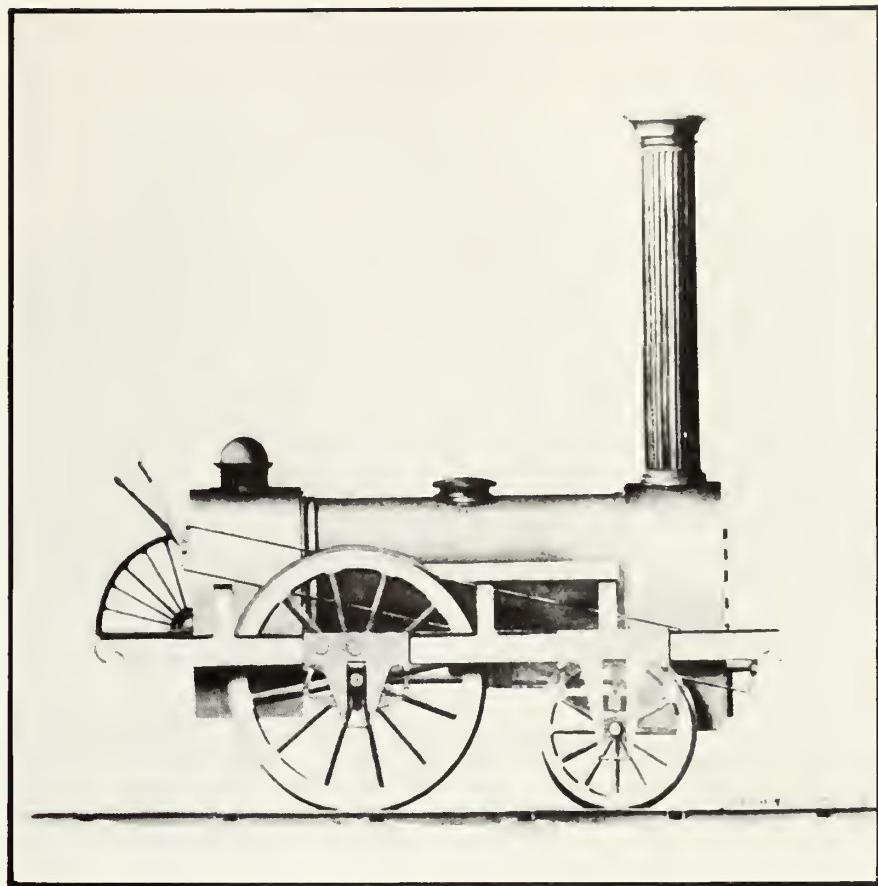
ties on the way is the bog in Mansfield where the road sunk during its formation to a depth of 40 feet — and it is also a curious fact that 16½ miles of this road are on a perfectly straight line. After examining the work in Canton, we took the engine at twenty minutes past five and were landed in Boston about six o'clock. The party accompanied the directors to the Tremont House and enjoyed their

overflowing hospitality with keen appetites and grateful hearts. In the evening we were indebted to Thomas B. Wales, Esq., President of the Railroad Company for an elegant and hospitable entertainment at his house (that was 24 Winter Street). At fourteen minutes past six, Wednesday morning, the cars began to move from the depot at West Boston, and at fourteen minutes before seven were exactly at the fifteen mile stone, having come fifteen miles at the rate of 30 miles per hour, two of the miles of which we passed over in three minutes forty seconds, and one mile in one minute and forty-seven seconds, or at the rate of 34 miles per hour.

Five weeks later the viaduct was finally finished. During the last few days prior to completion, a great debate occurred (as you might expect) as to who should have the privilege of being the first to cross the viaduct by rail. The need to call out the militia again was averted when all agreed that the unsung hero of the viaduct's construction would have the privilege. So, with great ceremony and laughter, Charlie, the old white horse who had hauled the flat car between the viaduct and Sharon, was placed upon the flat car and hauled across the viaduct, thus becoming the first passenger to cross the structure.¹⁰

Tuesday, July 28, 1835, saw the first regular passage over the viaduct. The *Boston Advertiser* of July 30, 1835, reported the event:

We understand that the magnificent Viaduct at Canton is so far completed that the locomotives with their trains of cars pass from Boston to Providence without interruption. The train which left this city at four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon arrived in Providence in an hour and forty-seven minutes. It returned the same evening with about a hundred passengers in two hours and three minutes.



Above: The first Boston & Providence engine "Whistler" built by Robert Stephenson in 1833 in England. Later renamed Massachusetts, it was lost in a bog at Mansfield.

In running the 41 miles between Boston and Providence, 1-1/8 cords of pitch pine would be used at a cost of \$7.00 a cord.

The Whistler was named by Captain McNeill in honor of his brother-in-law, George W. Whistler.

Both West Point graduates, Whistler married McNeill's sister Anna. Many years later Anna McNeill Whistler sat as a model for her artist son and helped create one of America's most beloved portraits. Collection of Railway Locomotive Historical Society.

¹Alvin Fay Harlow, *Steelways of New England* (2nd ed.), New York, American Book, Stratford Press, 1946, p. 105.

²Ibid., p. 107.

³Historic Stone Bridge, *Canton Journal*, August 11, 1933, p. 7 (Reprinted from *Norwood Messenger*, August 8, 1933).

⁴*Canton Journal*, August 11, 1933.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷*Canton Journal*, August 11, 1933.

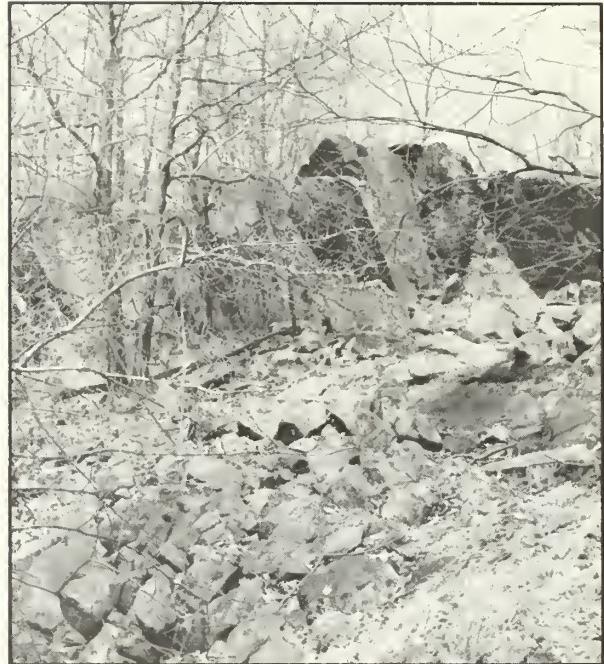
⁸Ibid.

⁹McNeill christened the first engine in honor of his brother-in-law. Harlow, *Steelways of New England*, p. 108-109.

¹⁰Robert Rogers, "The Canton Viaduct" (unpublished, Canton Historical Society).



Shaped, but rejected stone, Sharon Quarry site. Photo date November 23, 1974. Photo by Author.

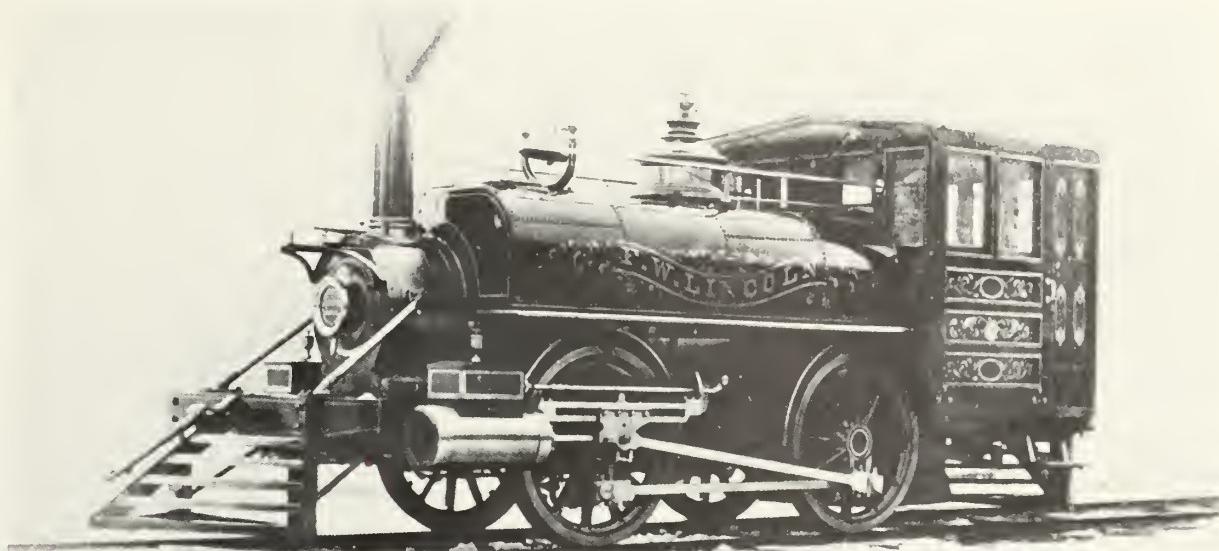


Above: Piles of granite chipped rubble at Sharon Quarry. Photo date November 23, 1974. Photo by Author.

Below: Quarry site in Sharon where Viaduct granite was obtained. Photo date November 23, 1974. Photo by Author.



The F.W. Lincoln built by the Taunton Locomotive Works in 1869 was named after the first President of the Stoughton Branch Railroad. It later was renamed the Stoughton and was the regularly used locomotive on the branch, being housed in the single stall engine house at Canton Junction. Photo circa 1870. Collection of Author.



Chapter Two

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1840-1870

1844	Stoughton Branch Railroad Company, Incorporated. March 16, 1844. Construction on Stoughton Branch Railroad begins summer 1844.
1845	Stoughton Branch Railroad opened to travel, April 7, 1845.
1849	Boston and Providence Railroad names a locomotive built at the Roxbury Shops — "Canton."
1860	Main line double tracked, including the Viaduct.
1865	Jacob Sillaway named Canton Station Agent in January.

1840 - 1870

Following the construction of the Boston and Providence and the completion of the Viaduct, there existed a dark age in Canton's Railroad history. With a few exceptions, little information has been uncovered that would shed light upon the rail, industrial or social events of these thirty years — yet this was a period of growth. The Town of Canton's two basic and heaviest industries, the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company (K.I.M.) and the Revere Copper Works, enjoyed their greatest success during these very same years. The population of Canton reflected this with the census showing the following:

1830	1,515
1840	1,995
1850	2,598
1860	3,242
1870	3,879

On a percentage basis, Canton is no stranger to periods of sustained growth.

THE STOUGHTON BRANCH RAILROAD

The most significant event of this period was the construction of the Stoughton Branch Railroad. This new railroad served several purposes; the most immediate of which was providing rail service to the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company. Lyman Kinsley was one of the three incorporators.

Perhaps the most concise record of the early days of the Stoughton Branch Railroad can be found in the pages of the American Railroad Journal.

Stoughton Branch Railroad

Station in Boston, at the station of the Boston and Providence Railroad

President

F.W. Lincoln; Office - Canton

Treasurer

James Dunbar; Office - Canton

Agent at Stoughton

Jesse Holmes

Agent at Boston

Daniel Nason

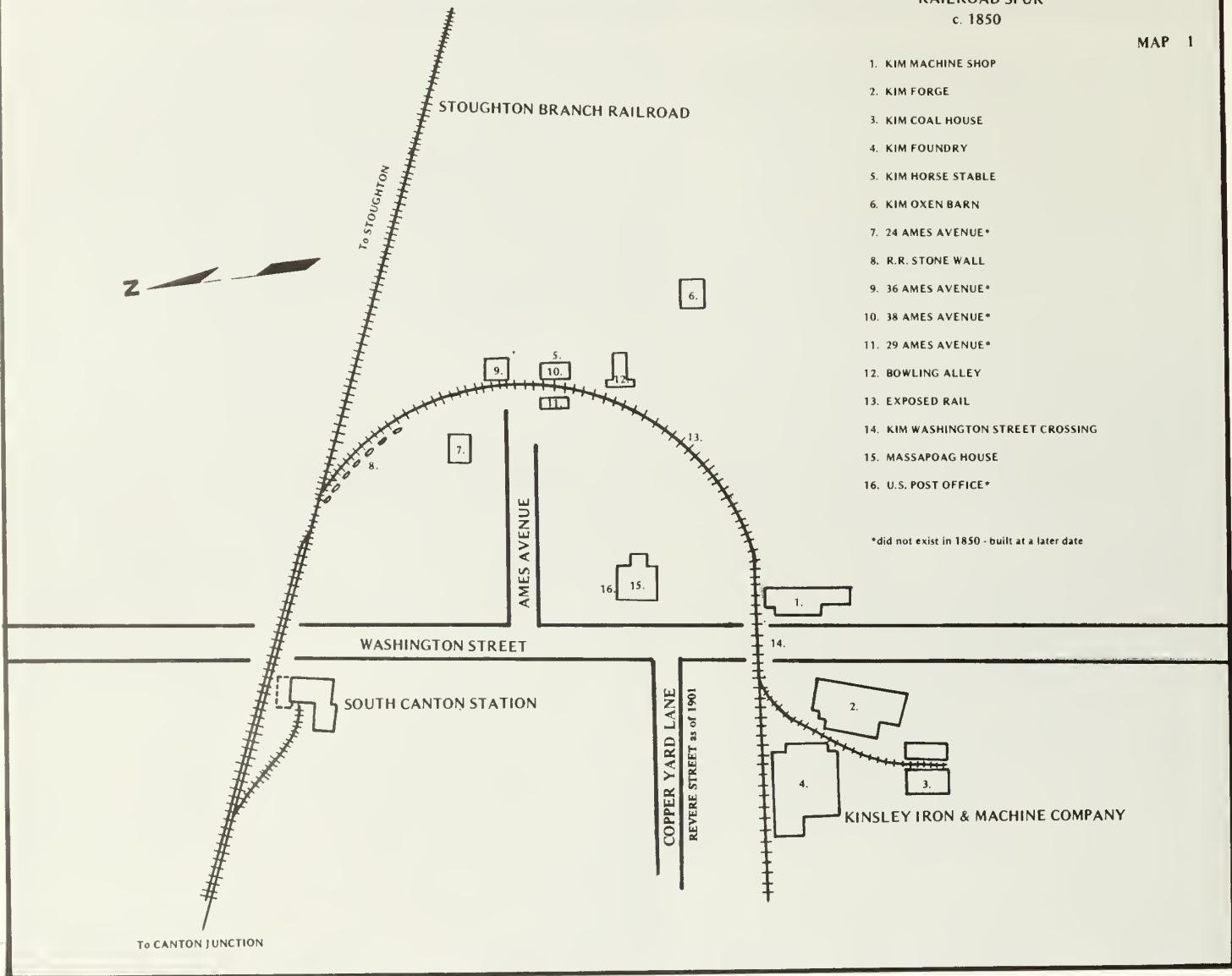
The Stoughton Branch Railroad Company was incorporated with a capital stock of \$150,000 by the Legislature of Massachusetts, March 16, 1844, and authorized to construct a Railroad from a point at or near the depot of the Boston and Providence Railroad in Canton; thence to come convenient point in the Village of Stoughton. The construction of the road was commenced in the summer of 1844, and the line opened for travel April 7, 1845. It is operated by a contract with the Boston and Providence Railroad Company, who furnish the rolling stock, keep the road in repair, and receive certain tolls and percentage on the business done.

The characteristics of the Stoughton Branch given in the report of 1854, made to the Legislature are as follows:

Length of road, single track; 4 miles, 222 feet

KINSLEY IRON & MACHINE COMPANY
RAILROAD SPUR
C. 1850

MAP 1



Aggregate length of sidings and other tracks, except main tracks, 2,777 feet.
Weight of rail, per yard, 56 lbs.
Maximum grade, 46 feet per mile for 740 feet.
Total rise and fall, 135½ feet.
Total radius of curvature, 1,080 feet.
Length of curvature, 682 feet.
Total degree of curvature, 172 feet.
Straight line, 2 miles, 207 feet.
Aggregate length of wooded truss bridges, 50 feet.
Stations, 3.¹
(See Appendix for detailed financial statement.)

The Stoughton Branch Railroad intersected Washington Street in Canton, and that location was selected as the site of a passenger and freight station. The area was then known as "South Canton." The population center of the

Town had shifted to the area now known as Canton Center, because workingmen needed to walk easily to and from their jobs at the major industries in Canton.

From an economic standpoint, the Stoughton Branch was divided equally between passenger and freight. However, the presence of Lyman Kinsley, as an incorporator of the Branch Railroad emphasizes the importance of rail service for his growing company, Kinsley Iron and Machine.

The first known industrial spur off the branch was installed to serve the Kinsley Iron and Machine complex. (See Map 1.) It can only be assumed that the construction date of the Kinsley spur closely followed or coincided with the completion date of the branch itself. The spur saw considerable amounts of coal and iron ore arrive, inbound, with axles, wheels, spikes, and a wide variety of iron products as

outbound goods. The cars were placed on the Kinsley spur by the Railroad, but it was left to oxen to guide the cars down to the K.I.M. works, having to cross Washington Street in the process. A slight grade made the inbound deliveries less a chore than one might expect, but the return of the cars with heavy goods was a task for the oxen teams.

A considerable amount of evidence of the Kinsley spur remains even though it was abandoned in 1907-09. A rounded stone wall, retaining higher ground, is plainly visible as one walks to the rear of the property at 24 Ames Avenue. The curvature of the stone wall is indicative of the angle of the spur. Another indicator in the same general area is a rock outcropping cut oddly enough to indicate that it had been hammered back so that it would not interfere with a car clearance.

Just outside the rear entrance to the

Post Office parking lot lies a length of embedded tracks (frog). This section of track has appeared and disappeared over the years, with dirt and gravel occasionally covering it. Lastly, the foundation for the oxen barn abuts the house at 56 Ames Avenue. The K.I.M. or the "iron works," as it was known locally, kept eight oxen to handle the switching duties.

The only remaining building of the K.I.M. complex is the Axle Shop. Today it is used by several small businesses at 639 and 641 Washington Street.

As was the case on the Boston and Providence, the early stations were hastily constructed wooden buildings intended to be temporary structures, but often having to serve for longer than planned. Research failed to uncover any photographic trace of the first station at South Canton (later changed to Canton Station). Reference can be made to the composite drawing of the K.I.M. spur map for its basic shape and layout.

VIADUCT RENOVATIONS

It was only twenty-five years after the opening of the Viaduct that the wisdom and foresight of McNeill began to evidence itself as the traffic on the Boston and Providence rose to a point where double tracking of the B&P's main line became necessary. The Viaduct, with its single set of rails set in the crown of the structure, underwent its first major renovation. Robert Rogers of Canton,



Top: The first Stoughton depot and a rare view of a very early railroad structure. Built by the Stoughton Branch Railroad, it was used by the Boston and Providence until 1888, when the Old Colony replaced it with the current depot. Photo date circa 1880. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

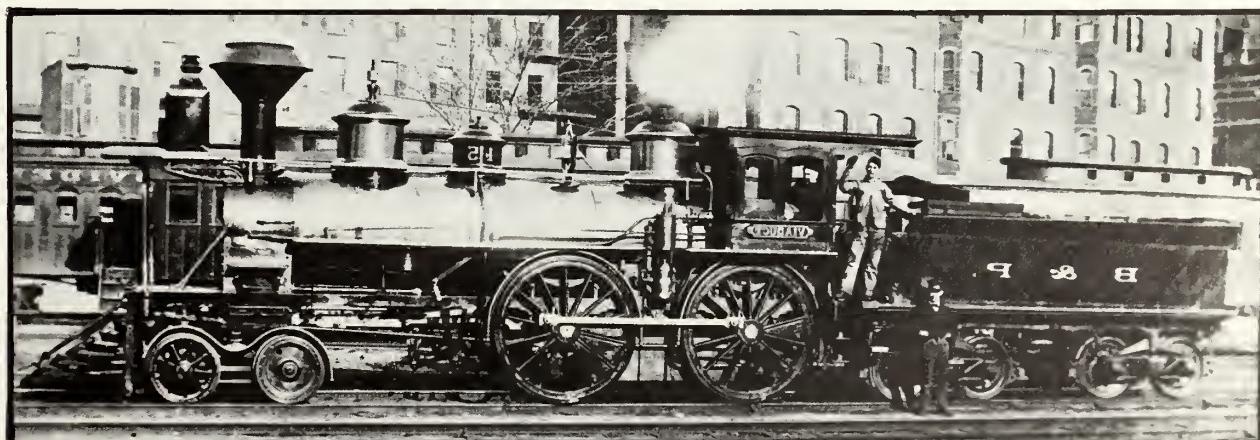
Middle: A rare view of the original station at Canton Junction. The sign on the station is Canton, which indicates that the photo was prior to the renaming in 1879.

This was the station of Jacob Sillway era — one can only speculate if he is in this picture. The camera was obviously a novelty, as it has everyone's attention.

The wooden station and its brick addition sports an unusual cupola. Note the horsedrawn coach from the Revere Copper Company, along with a horsedrawn car.

The locomotive F.W. Lincoln was visible — later to be renamed Stoughton. The view is toward Boston. Photo date circa 1870. Courtesy of Canton Historical Society.

Below: The Viaduct was the last locomotive built by the Boston and Providence Railroad in its own shops. It has the double distinction of being the last inside connecting locomotive built for the Boston & Providence. Photo date circa 1875. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.



a great grandson of Paul Revere, and a local historian, wrote in this century:

In 1860 when the necessity of a double track became evident, the parapets were removed, large wooden timbers, somewhat longer than the width of the deck, were placed across the structure, on the ends of which a heavy wooden fence was built and the track laid, the outer of which rails are close to, if not actually on, the side walls. A hard pine timber was securely bolted on the top of the walls as guard rails. These timbers ran the entire length of the bridge on both sides. This stood for some time when in 1880, the wooden timbers were removed and iron girders replaced them with a strong iron fence or railing. This whole structure being fastened together and securely anchored to the stone work.²

(The Edgemoor Iron Company was the 1880 contractor.)

JACOB SOLLOWAY

In January of 1865, a new station agent was named to replace the retiring agent, Oliver Deane. This newcomer to the Town was 29 years old and recently mustered out of the Union Army, First Lieutenant Jacob Solloway. During the next twenty-five years, until his death at age 54 in 1890, Jacob Solloway was the Railroad in the eyes of the Townspeople in Canton. During the golden era of railroading, Solloway presided, from his agent's office over the day-to-day life and death matters of the Town.

A station agent during the nineteenth century held numerous official and unofficial positions. He was, at once, the Town's ambassador to the outside world, official greeter, travel agent, social worker, industrial developer, a friend and confidant to all "his" regular travelers and commuters.

He ran his office like a modern-day Chamber of Commerce and communications center. A good agent kept an eye on the late night train and on who had just returned home from Boston and required a horse drawn cab.

Jacob Solloway came fully prepared to operate what was to become the busiest agency on the Boston and Providence Railroad (with the obvious exception of the two major cities). His mother was the former Caroline Mason, born in Bristol, Rhode Island. His father was Jacob Solloway, born in New Bedford, a direct descendant of the Solloway family who first settled in Newbury in 1634. Young Jacob was born in Providence in 1835. His early life and education took place in Providence, where he learned the druggist's trade. He continued in this practice in



Above: Close-up view of the Viaduct's train crew. Photo date circa 1875. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

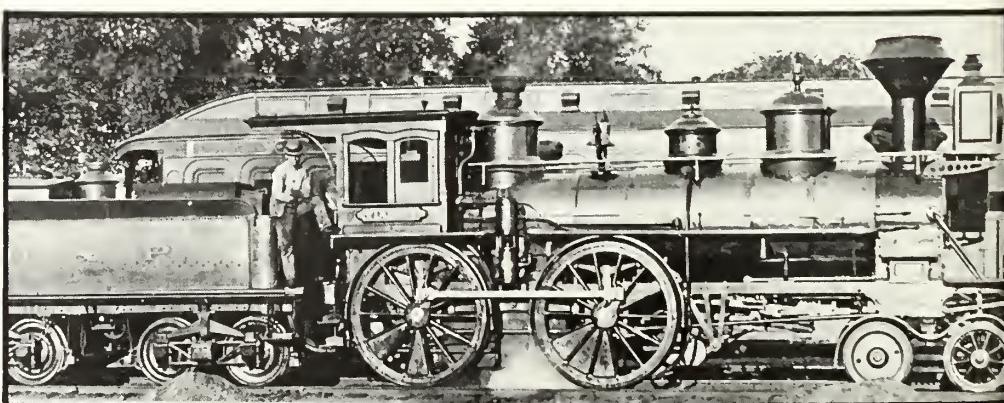
Below: A close-up view of the locomotive Viaduct which had a twenty-year career on the B&P and later Old Colony. Photo date circa 1875. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

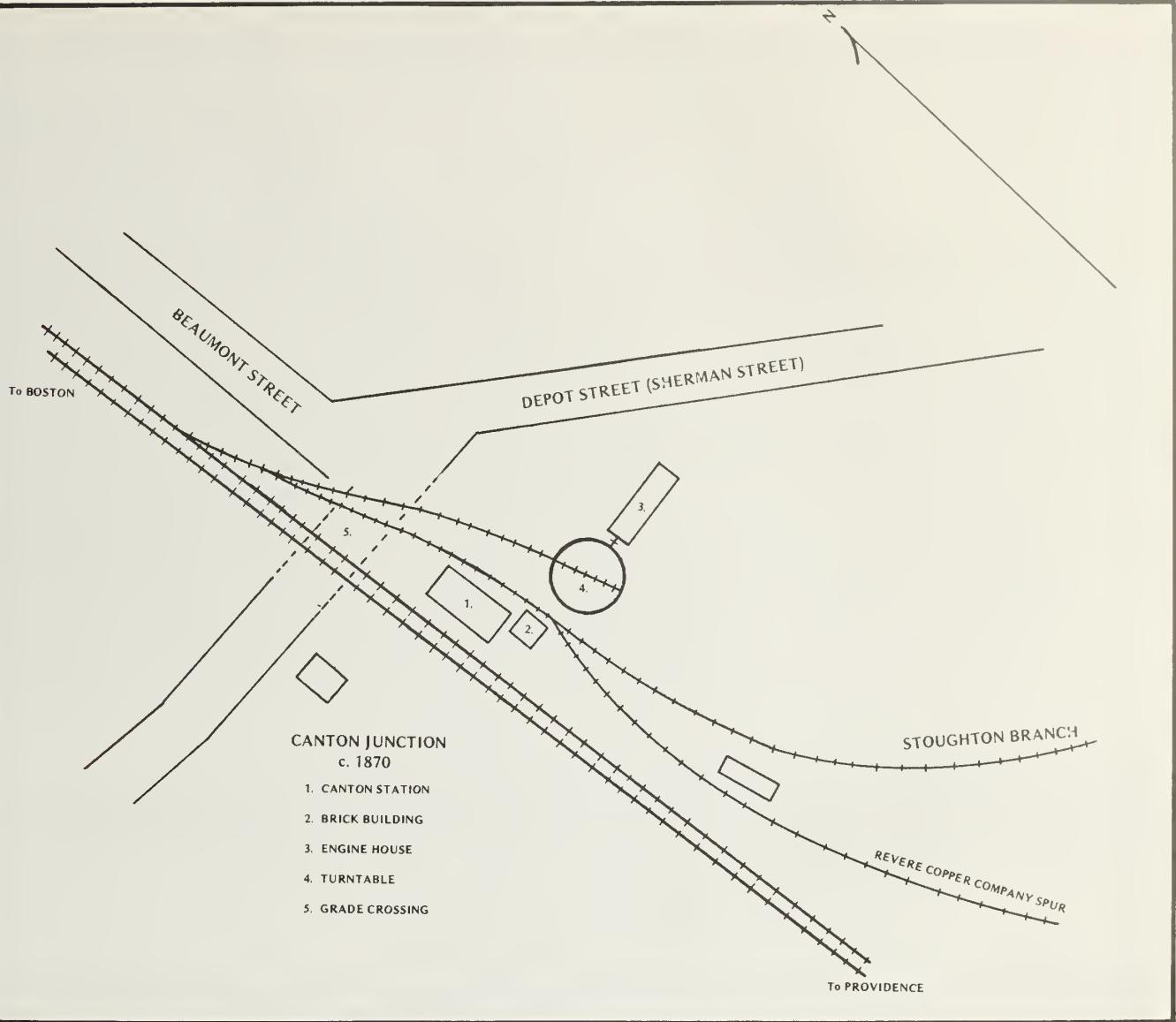
New York City and other places prior to the Civil War. At the beginning of the war, he enlisted in the 5th New York Regiment and was mustered out a First Lieutenant. He then entered the office of the Boston and Providence Railroad where, in a short time, he impressed Superintendent Nason who appointed him in January of 1865 to the position in Canton.

Running the complex operation at Canton Junction and being sensitive to the needs and requirements of the area's shippers, businessmen and travelers was no ordinary task. Railroading in that era was a challenging occupation, and only a highly competent person could aspire to and claim the success that Jacob Solloway achieved.

¹American Railroad Journal, Henry V. Poor, Editor, New York, J.H. Schiltz and Co. 1855, p. 387.

²Robert Rogers "The Canton Viaduct" (unpublished, Canton Historical Society).

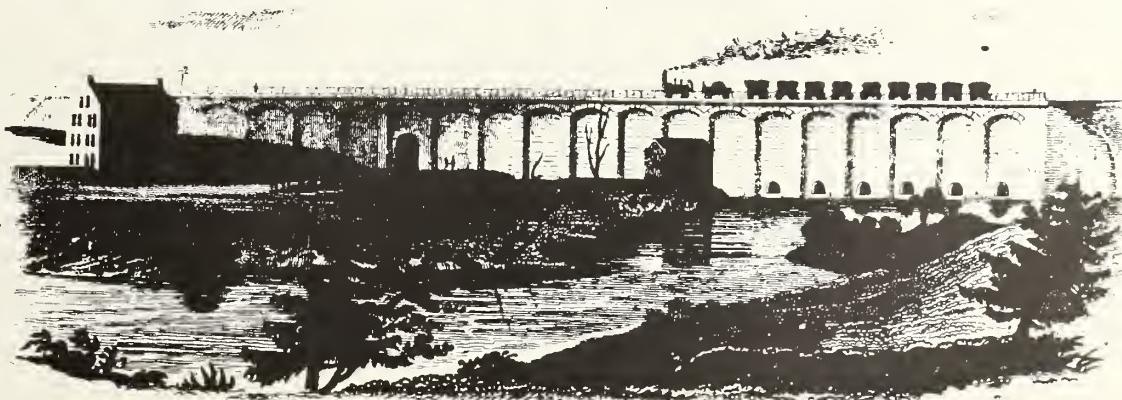




Chapter Three

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1870's

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- 1878 Town of Canton Requests Boston and Providence Railroad to Build New Station at South Canton (Canton.)
- 1879 Station Names Change — As of October 1, 1879, South Canton Becomes Canton and Canton Becomes Canton Junction.



1870 — 1879

The eighteen seventies provide us with the earliest newspaper reports of local Railroad events.

EARLY NEWSPAPER ITEMS

The first Railroad related item is from the December 31, 1870 edition of the *Norfolk County Gazette*.

The fine stone used by the Boston and Providence Railroad in the construction of the splendid wall near the line of their third track at Hogg Bridge, were quarried at Canton near the cutting work of Mr. Franklin Reed.

This brief news item is quite typical of hundreds that would follow in the next fifty years whenever landmarks carried the name of an owner, a nearby dweller, and, on occasion, a nickname.

The brevity of news items of the day is illustrated by the following:

At the old Canton Station (Canton Junction, ed.) on the B&P RR a misplaced switch demolished several cars and the turntable.

Norfolk County Gazette
December 20, 1873

Travel by businessmen had reached a level, in 1875, where a car was attached to the Stonington train at 6 p.m. and switched off on the return train. At this time, through rail service via the Shore Line was not possible, and the trip from Stonington to New York was made by steamer.

During the last week in April, 1878, Station Agent Sillaway discovered that, between 10:30 p.m. Wednesday evening and 5:30 a.m. Thursday morning, the depot had been broken into by prying open the window. The lock on the corporation safe had also been pried open and the safe "rifled and plundered." There was a loss of about \$300 in several packages and compartments consisting of gold, bills, currency and silver. Two Railroad bonds, valued at \$2,000 and belonging to Sillaway, were taken. The agent had lost the savings of nearly fourteen years.

EARLY RAILROAD STATIONS.

During the 1870's, those dissatisfied with both of Canton's depots became more vocal. Other problems of the period included the K.I.M. grade crossing at Washington Street, the grade crossing at South Canton Station itself, and the crossing at Canton Junction where it was necessary to pass over four sets of tracks enroute to Norwood. It was, in fact, necessary to cross two sets of tracks in order to reach the Canton (Junction) station and Jacob Sillaway's office.

On June 17, 1878, the Town of Canton passed a resolution requesting the President and Directors of the B&P RR to build a new station at South Canton. The station then standing had been built in 1844-45. The B&P responded that they were cutting expenses because of business and receipts falling off. There was concern that there was very little land to build upon. The Railroad owned very little land in that neighborhood, for when the original South Canton depot was built in 1844-45, it was regarded as being a great distance out of town. Now that the population center of the Town had shifted, the desire for a substantial station at South Canton became a major concern to Canton's people.

The 1870's drew to a close with a clarification of local station names. Canton Station had been the original station on the main line of the B&P RR. When the Stoughton Branch Railroad was built, its station at the Washington Street crossing was called South Canton station. Per order of the B&P RR on October 1, 1879, Canton Station became Canton Junction and South Canton became Canton Station.

Samuel B. Noyes, judging from his writing, must have enjoyed a warm friendship with Jacob Sillaway and used the changing of the station names to demonstrate the Townspeople's utter dissatisfaction with the shabby shack-like stations that served Canton.

CANTON JUNCTION

On and after the first day of October, 1879, the name of the only station in the Town of Canton on the B&P Railroad, where passengers can take the cars for Providence will be changed to Canton Junction. The station on the Stoughton Branch Railroad — now known as South Canton — will be known hereafter as Canton. This change is not to be wondered at. According to all rules of railroading, all stations where roads diverge should be called junctions. Yet the rule has not been observed at Mansfield or Readville or Forest Hills on the B&P RR. Perhaps the young people who travel on the road or who pay freight charges have not asked it. Canton people have fretted a good deal in the past ten years on account of the hardship of being compelled to pay five or eight cents additional when they had purchased a ticket to Canton intending to go to South Canton. And shippers of freight from distant points to Canton have,

been subjected to unexpected expenses and annoyances by the detention of their merchandise at the old station. It is inevitable subservience of sentiment to materialism. Railroads are constructed to bring money to the pockets of the builders and to accommodate travel, not to perpetuate local titles or to compile genealogies.

"And if they cannot change the thing,
Why then they'll change the name, sir."¹

CANTON JUNCTION

As was predicted in this column the change of names of the Canton Station and the South Canton Station took place on October 1st, 1879. The new signs are fine and brilliant specimens of lettering and gilding but become the old building as little as a new plush hat does a shabby suit of clothes. The tickets, baggage checks and all the passenger details are new. But the station remains the same both unsightly, cramped, inconvenient; the approaches to both dangerous, the old Canton station being particularly so as no team can be driven up to a platform or door of the depot house without crossing four tracks on the west side and one track on the east side. A somewhat extensive observation of the railroad stations in the United States, warrants the opinion that few stations are more improperly located, and from the changes which appear to be contemplated, its condition will soon be worse. People don't mind these outward matters much until some accident causes reflection. The officers who have charge of this station are of the most faithful and attentive character and it is well that they are so. Call it Canton Junction, if you will, but old habitues will only know it is the station where Major Sillaway is agent and the venerable Jeff Powers keeps watch and all the travelers well know that when they take a train for Canton it will pause at the old station as it has heretofore done.²

Neither Samuel Noyes nor his friend, Jacob Sillaway, could have possibly known during that fall of 1879 that an astonishing decade and a half of change lay before them. Virtually all that they knew regarding the physical plant of the Boston and Providence would be completely changed. Only the Viaduct would remain intact, even though it too would be crowned with its iron work.

¹ Samuel B. Noyes, *Norfolk County Gazette*, September 3, 1879.

² Samuel B. Noyes, *Norfolk County Gazette*, October 4, 1879.



Canton Station — built in 1880 by the Boston and Providence Railroad, it served as a station until 1949 when the agent was removed. The building, which was a classic piece of early railroad architecture, was demolished in 1959. Photo date: circa 1920. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

Chapter Four

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1880's

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1880 | New depot built at Canton Station |
| 1882 | Iron bridge replaces wooden "red bridge" over Bolivar Street |
| 1883 | Canton's Superintendent of Schools killed by railroad snowplow, December 22, 1883 |
| 1886 | Deane coal shed and trestle erected
Siding installed to Springdale gravel pit |
| 1888 | Boston and Providence Railroad leased to Old Colony Railroad on April 17, 1888
Chapman Street Bridge is rebuilt with iron
New Spaulding Street Bridge built |
| 1889 | New freight house constructed at Canton Junction |

1880 - 1889

Having accomplished the change of names at the Town's two depots, the Boston & Providence began a program of modernization in Canton that was to continue for the next fourteen years.

NEW CANTON STATION

The only reference uncovered regarding the construction of a new depot at Canton Station was in the May 22, 1880 issue of the *Norfolk County Ga-*

zette in an item entitled "New Depot." The work on building a new depot on the Stoughton Branch Railroad at South Canton (now Canton) has begun.

This was to be the depot that townspeople were to use until February 1949, when the agent was removed. The building was razed in 1959. The old depot it replaced was described as a three cornered split box and, as I have mentioned earlier, no photo has been found of this early depot at South

Canton.

THE CANTON JOURNAL

The Canton News disappeared as a regular column from the *Norfolk County Gazette* with the September 4, 1880 issue. The growth and stability of the *Canton Journal*, which can trace its origin to 1876 was presumably a major factor. The microfilmed copies of the *Canton Journal* begin with the year 1882. It is with this excellent record that the day-to-day news, including trag-

edy, dreams, and occasionally, errors, come down to us. Some of the news items could easily be today's events with dates merely transposed; others are clearly part of an age that has completely passed. The following are examples of each:

FEBRUARY 10, 1882

Those who were obliged to walk to the Junction to catch the second train to Boston Monday morning used strong language behind the backs of the employees of the Stoughton Branch, whom they thought might have cleared the tracks the previous day.

From a column called "Home Occurrences"¹⁵

JULY 28, 1882

After the 12:00 noon Stoughton train had passed the Canton Junction on Saturday last, the switchman forgot to reset the switch to the main track. Consequently, when the 1:00 p.m. New York Shore Line fast express came along at 1:20 p.m., it took the Stoughton track at the rate of 45 MPH, almost approaching the Canton Station before being stopped. No one was injured and no damage done, except the breaking of a spring on one of the passenger cars. Those who saw the train on its wild career expected to see it thrown from the track. It was certainly a narrow escape from a fearful railroad accident. The damaged car was left at the Junction, and the train proceeded on its way some twenty minutes behind time.¹⁶

AUGUST 11, 1882

The Sunday train to Boston proves to be very convenient to the Town. It allows persons who cannot possibly get away during the week to spend a day down the harbor or at the beach. Sunday trains are highly appreciated in every community but whether or not it be a proper way to spend the Sabbath, is an open question.¹⁷

Continuing a program of modernization, the B&P announced its intention to replace the old wooden "Red Bridge" over Bolivar Street. The new structure would be a 50' iron bridge and allow the narrow road to be widened. The replacement work took place in September of 1882. There are, to this day, old time Canton residents who refer to the iron Bolivar Street Bridge as the "Red Bridge" — old terms die hard.

Accidents were all too common around the Railroad, as is revealed in this piece of period journalism:

It has been the practice for some time, of a number of boys who live near the Stone Factory to jump on to moving trains at the Junction

Station and ride to a point above the bridge and then jump off. They have been repeatedly cautioned and driven away by station agent Silloway, by the switchmen, and by the trainmen, but to no purpose. Wednesday morning while these boys were stealing their daily rides, one of the number named John Gaffney fell between two cars and was run over, crushing his left arm to a jelly. He was taken to the Massachusetts General Hospital on the 3 o'clock train, where it was found necessary to amputate the arm at the shoulder.¹⁸

The Canton Junction crossing was extremely dangerous, as an 1870 map of the area would show. The crossings, however, were not usually the scene of fatal accidents. More frequent were instances of people walking the tracks and being struck by a train. Certainly one of the most shocking deaths occurred on a cold Saturday morning, the 22nd of December, 1883. Canton's Superintendent of Schools, George Washington Capen, and a merchant seaman, Joseph Morton, were struck and killed by a Railroad snowplow near the Deane Ice House as the two men walked the tracks from Canton Station to Canton Junction to take mainline trains.¹⁹ The inquest following the accident is a very interesting insight into operation procedures on the Stoughton Branch, with various trainmen and Supervisors giving their testimony regarding the tragic accident.²⁰

In May of 1885, from his position as flagman at the Canton Station crossing, Fred Reed of Springdale watched as the trackmen on the Stoughton Branch began replacing the old iron rails. If a person could pick an ideal time of the last century to go back and visit, the summer of 1885 would have to rank high on the list for someone wanting to view the old Canton.

With its industries bustling, local spirit was at a new high and the Town began to believe almost anything was possible — including stopping the New York to Boston shoreline trains at Canton Junction.

Many Canton families traveled to Canton Station where, nearby, a photographic car with an artist named Holmes was kept busy for several weeks.

Canton Station Agent King posted weather indications in the depot daily. A mile away, Jacob Silloway had completed twenty years of service at the Junction and was finding his job becoming more and more demanding.

The Kinsley I&M Co. are receiving large quantities of coal, sand, and other freight into their yard just now, and the Captain (Silloway, ed.) is very busy. A long train of coal was put in the other day, and

they broke apart, ran down onto the crossing causing a block at the street for about twenty minutes. The Iron Works consume annually between 7,000 and 8,000 tons of Cumberland or soft coal, besides a good quantity of hard coal.²¹

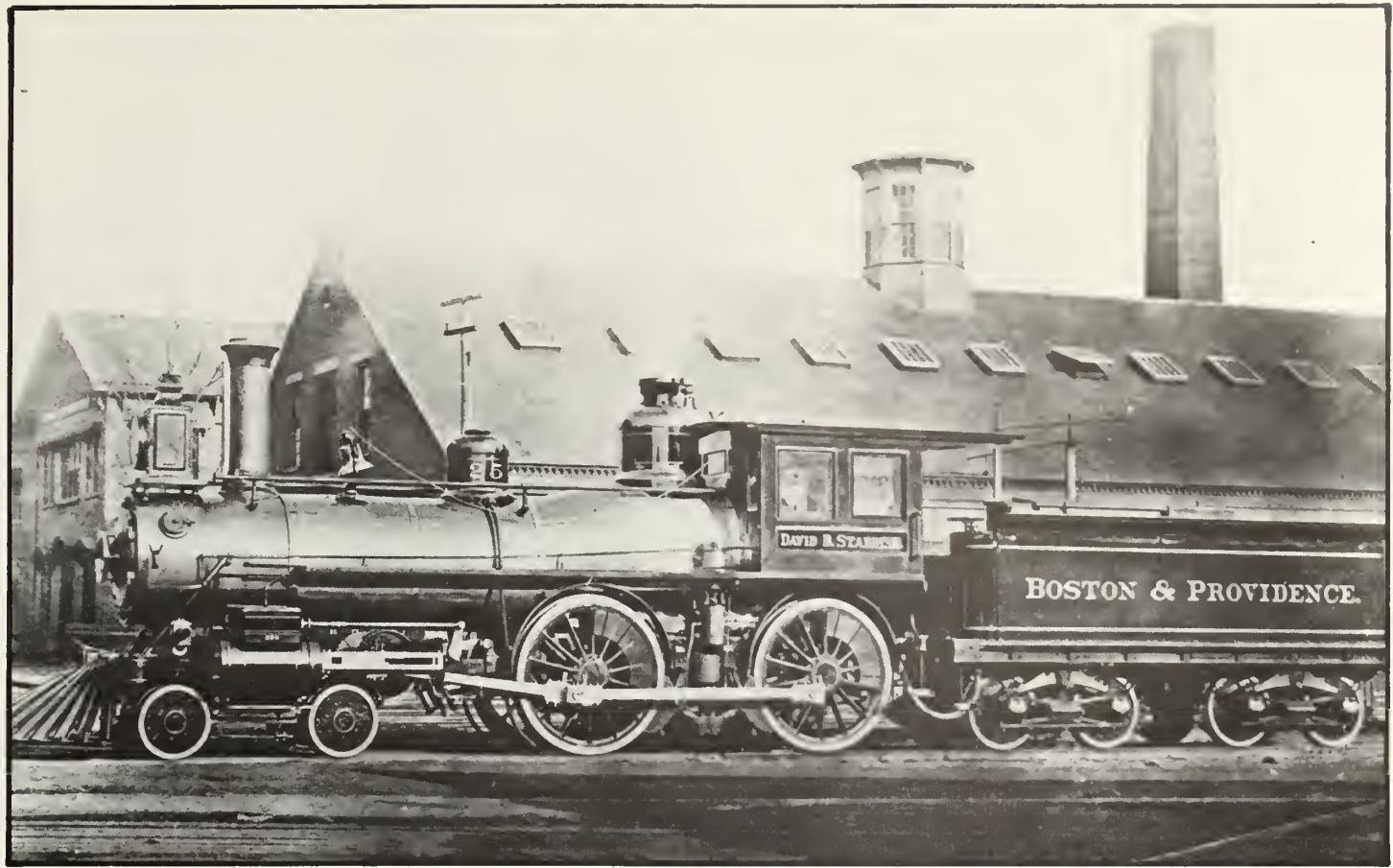
The spring of 1886 bringing a new building season, saw Silloway's ancient and hard-to-reach depot at the Junction being given repairs, to the dismay of many Canton townspeople who would have preferred a new station.

By 1886, it was clear that the Canton Junction tracks were handling more traffic than its current design could efficiently deal with. Silloway, who was from every indication a past master in politics, railroad operation and amateur psychiatry, found his skills increasingly taxed.

Yesterday morning about 11:15 o'clock as the freight train was running on the side track, one of the cars was derailed, which caused considerable trouble. The passengers on the 11:56 train from Stoughton, with those who were waiting at the Canton Station, were conveyed to the Junction in a box car.²²

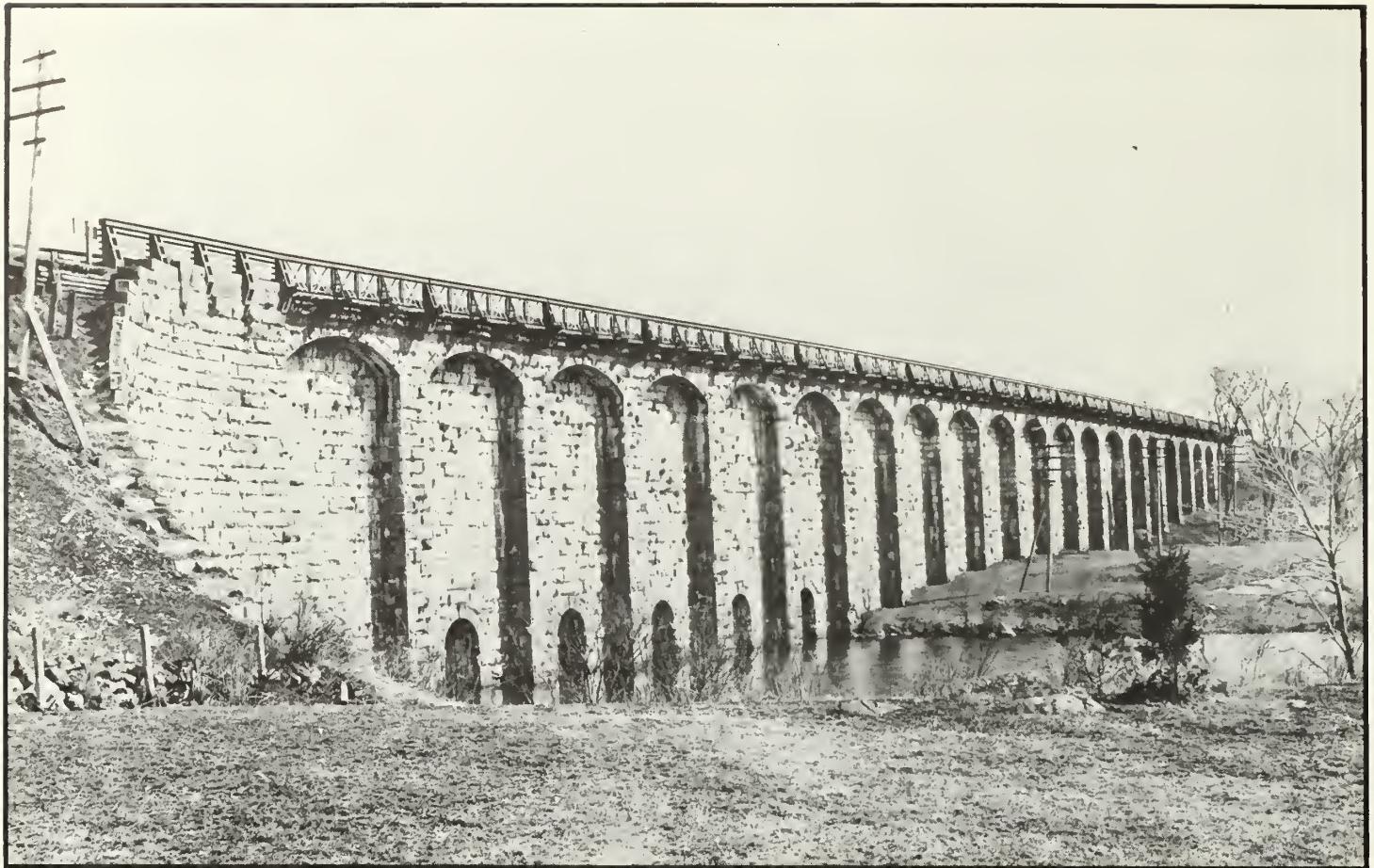
May of 1886 saw the Deane Coal Company build a new side railroad track at the Junction extending to a point where it connected with and ran along the top of a two hundred foot long coal trestle.²³ This structure was to remain standing until the summer of 1973, when it was razed.

The Revere Copper Company usually bought large quantities of Pennsylvania coal, but labor problems forced them to purchase coal from Pictou, Nova Scotia.²⁴ It was a local boast that Canton furnished more freight traffic than any town on the Boston & Providence save those two cities. Some truth might exist in that boast as the B&P added additional side tracks at the Junction to help relieve the freight car congestion and ease the frantic existence of Agent Silloway, who was by 1886 noticeably slowing up, though only 49 years of age. Rest and a change of scenery were ordered so the "Major" or "Captain" Silloway, depending upon which you preferred, made two long trips — first to see his brother in Virginia in February of 1887, and then to London with the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Association in the summer of 1887. Silloway's luck, however, had turned against him while he was in England, as his office was robbed, and fifteen dollars worth of plug tobacco was taken. More serious was that, despite the enjoyment of the trips, he was fatigued to the point where he knew that his final few years were before him. Jacob Silloway had diabetes — a fatal



Above: The David B. Standish was built at the Taunton Locomotive Works in 1883. The diameter of the drivers was 60", and the unit weighed 89,200 lbs. "A new locomotive named David Standish was placed on the regular Stoughton train on Wednesday. The late David Standish was, for more than thirty years, a faithful engineer on the Providence Road, and the placing of this locomotive on the train which he ran for so many years is a fitting tribute to his memory." Canton Journal, November 23, 1883. Photo date: circa 1883. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. Below: Dean Coal Company shed at Canton Junction. Coal had been unloaded at this location since 1886, when part of this structure was built. This facility was first served by the Boston & Providence Railroad. A splendid example of a late 19th century coal handling operation... Carloads of coal were placed along the 200-foot trestle and were unloaded by gravity into the eight stalls below. The shed was torn down during the summer of 1973. Photo date: February 25, 1968. Photo by Author.





The Edgemoor Iron Company installed the iron work on the top of the Viaduct in 1880. Photo date: circa 1885. Collection of Canton Historical Society.

disease in the 1880's. While he would periodically feel his old vigorous self, the Major's last years were to be the most difficult and unstable from the standpoint of his profession.

Prior to his first trip in the fall of 1886, events were continuing at a quickening pace. The local people were successful in having two cars dropped off the Boston-bound New York train at 5:30 p.m. and two cars added to the morning New York train. A new shipper was on line in Springdale in the person of Patrick O'Riorden, who had purchased 32 acres of land in order to remove gravel and provide fill in Boston's Pemberton Square area for the purpose of building the new Court House.²⁵

At the K.I.M., the coal trestle caved in, wrecking five cars and the iron bridge across Bolivar Street which had replaced the wooden "Red Bridge" and which was painted green. It only compounded a stranger's confusion when, from habit, he was directed to go past the old "red bridge," which in effect was a new green bridge.

In the midst of all this, Phineas Sheppard passed out on the tracks at Springdale in a drunken state and was

run over by the Stoughton train. Sillo-way must have looked forward to his vacation.

END OF BOSTON AND PROVIDENCE RAILROAD

March of 1887 saw the Boston and Providence Railroad Corporation suffer its worst accident. A Dedham train on the West Roxbury Branch, while passing over the Bussey Bridge in Roslindale, plunged to the ground when the bridge collapsed. Over thirty people died in what is now referred to as the Bussey Bridge disaster.

In October of 1887, it was first rumored that the Old Colony Railroad would be leasing the Boston and Providence. The most immediate concern locally was about the effect it would have on the Town. One thing that did look stable was passenger fares. The Old Colony couldn't raise them as the Boston and Providence was charging as much as was allowed by law — 2½¢ per mile.

In October of 1887, the stone bridge over the Forge Pond received needed repairs, with a foot of Portland cement

topping off the work.²⁶ It is quite probable that the B&P was paying more attention to their aging physical plant, but the end of the B&P control was in sight.

At a meeting of the stockholders of the Boston and Providence Railroad Corporation held in Boston Wednesday, it was voted by a large majority to lease the B&P to the Old Colony. The old Board of Directors were unanimously re-elected. By this railroad transaction, the railroad men tell us that the two roads will be connected by the Stoughton Branch, thus opening a way of travel for Canton people to Brockton, Easton, and other places. Our businessmen expect that the freight rates will be advanced.²⁷

There was at least one local person who deplored the thought of Canton becoming a part of the Old Colony. In a letter to the *Boston Advertiser*, a person signing himself as "Manufacturer" detailed what he felt were the differences between the two railroads and how the Old Colony was inferior to every department of the B&P.²⁸



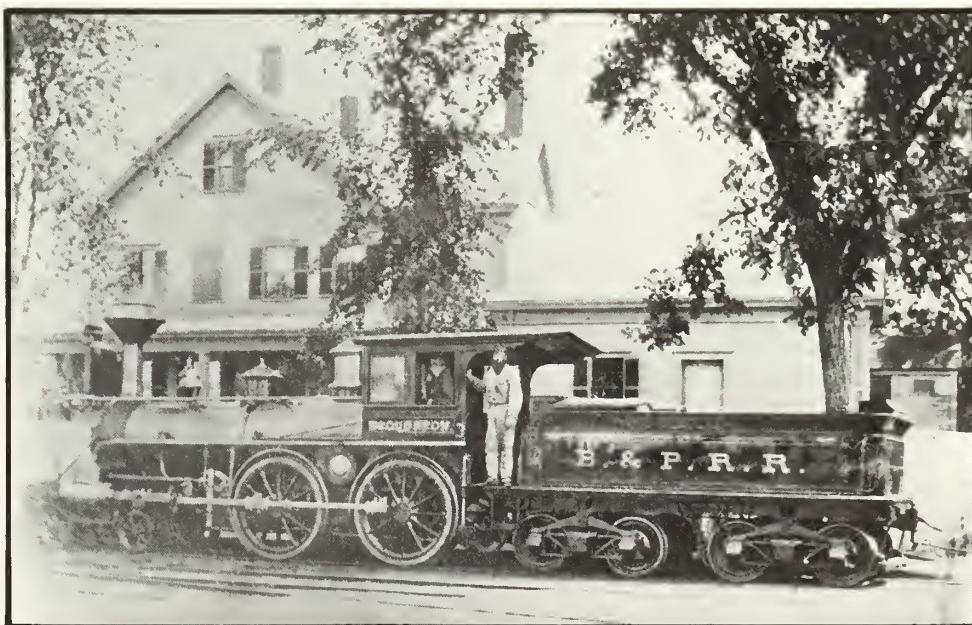
A week later, in typical public relations style, the management of the B&P presented its side of the issue.²⁹ One thing was certain, the B&P was bowing out slowly after fifty-two years of operation in the Town.

PHYSICAL AND OPERATIONAL CHANGES

1888 was a year of maddening change. The April 13, 1888 issue of the *Canton Journal* reported that the Spaulding Street bridge had caught fire from a locomotive and had been destroyed. This is the first reference to the existence of such a bridge. It was apparently a wooden bridge somewhere in the general vicinity of the present bridge. It was, in all likelihood, a foot bridge, judging from the construction necessary in building its replacement. By this time, in April, the Old Colony was operating the former B&P as its Providence Division. The whistle, two long and two short, peculiar to the Old Colony, was now heard on the Providence Division. Sadly, the custom of naming locomotives after people, places, or towns was ending, as the Old Colony began a systematic numbering of former B&P locomotives.

Above: The original arch leading Neponset Street toward Norwood. Note the rutted, muddy road which served this busy spot. Photo date: circa 1885. Collection of Canton Historical Society.

Below: The locomotive Stoughton pauses for a photograph. Photo date: circa 1887. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.



Rather than merely replacing the bridge at Spaulding Street, the Old Colony sent survey teams to the Canton area to review their new possession. It was a matter of concern to the townspeople that the grade crossing at Canton Junction was in full use once again and that the new owners were so slow in replacing the foot bridge. It would soon be apparent that the Old Colony had much bigger plans for the Junction area, as well as for the Stoughton Branch.

The Old Colony did return a train from Boston directly to the docks in Providence in June of 1888 — the first time in ten years that a train had operated in such fashion. On the other side of the ledger, however, the Old Colony notified Byam and Co. that their express car would be discontinued as of June 25, 1888, and that they would have to rely on regular freight service in the future. The growth of both passenger and, in particular, freight traffic in Canton was soon impressed upon the Old Colony. Two 1500-ton coal trains arrived in Canton the second week of July, 1888 only to find the Junction Yard so full that cars could not be accommodated. This same week saw a little known tragedy unfold at the K.I.M., when many men became ill, several fatally. The cause was believed to be a contaminated well in the factory.

Moving rapidly into the first phase of rebuilding and redesigning, the Old Colony announced plans in late July. The new Spaulding Street bridge was to be relocated to the present position. Before Labor Day, it was reported that Canadians had begun construction of the new bridge. By locating the bridge further east (toward Boston), the Old Colony planned to eliminate once and for all the old Depot Street (Sherman Street) grade crossing. In order that road traffic could gradually ascend to a sufficient height to clear the trains, Beaumont Street was raised gradually to a height some six feet above its original grade. Some houses today on Beaumont Street are several feet below the grade of the road.

That same fall, the Old Colony began several projects in various parts of Town — new switches at Canton Depot, a stone culvert under the tracks above the old Springdale Station; but the most ambitious was a new iron bridge to replace Hunniwell's bridge (Chapman Street). In the midst of all this activity, the Stoughton Branch had its largest deliveries of freight up to that time. The building of the new Springdale water pumping station meant many carloads of brick, pipe and coal. New traffic on the road included four new night trains on the Branch. The Old Colony had begun to

utilize the Stoughton Branch as an important route from Boston to southeastern Massachusetts.

Later in 1888, Elijah Morse, a Canton businessman, was elected to the United States Congress. The Doty Tavern, of Revolutionary War vintage, burned down. Jacob Sillaway again became ill and offered his resignation to his new employers. While the Old Colony had quickly accepted many resignations of other B&P personnel, they refused Sillaway's offer and instead they transferred Frank Lowell of Rayham to temporarily replace Sillaway until he felt well enough to return to his post. It was not lost upon the management of the Old Colony that Jacob Sillaway had made the Canton Junction work in spite of the functional obsolescence of its yard, dangerous main line switch and grimy station. His reduced health notwithstanding, Sillaway was a skilled, loyal railroader. After an absence of three months, Sillaway returned to his position at the Junction to find the Old Colony establishing a newsstand in the station, the new bridges open to traffic and the grade crossing gone at last. Congressman Morse, through his office, arranged to have a new postal service brought to Canton in the form of a sack of mail dropped from the New York Express at the Junction only seven hours after it left New York City.

The major building achievement of

1889 was the construction of a new freight house at the Junction. Begun in late spring and located, in part, on what would have been the Norwood side of the old grade crossing, the freight house was nearing completion when it was described in the newspaper. "The freight house at Canton Junction, will be a model of its kind. It is 75 feet long and 25 feet wide. The ends are north and south and each has a door, while each of the sides have three large wide doors and a wide platform on the north, east and south sides with overhanging roof."³⁰

"This freight house was destroyed by fire on January 10, 1976."³¹

¹⁵ Canton Journal, February 10, 1882.

¹⁶ Canton Journal, July 28, 1882.

¹⁷ Canton Journal, August 11, 1882.

¹⁸ Canton Journal, January 12, 1883.

¹⁹ Canton Journal, December 28, 1883.

²⁰ Canton Journal, January 4, 1884.

²¹ Canton Journal, August 14, 1885.

²² Canton Journal, October 9, 1895.

²³ Canton Journal, May 28, 1886.

²⁴ Canton Journal, May 28, 1886.

²⁵ Canton Journal, September 26, 1886.

²⁶ Canton Journal, October 21, 1887.

²⁷ Canton Journal, November 18, 1887.

²⁸ Canton Journal, November 18, 1887.

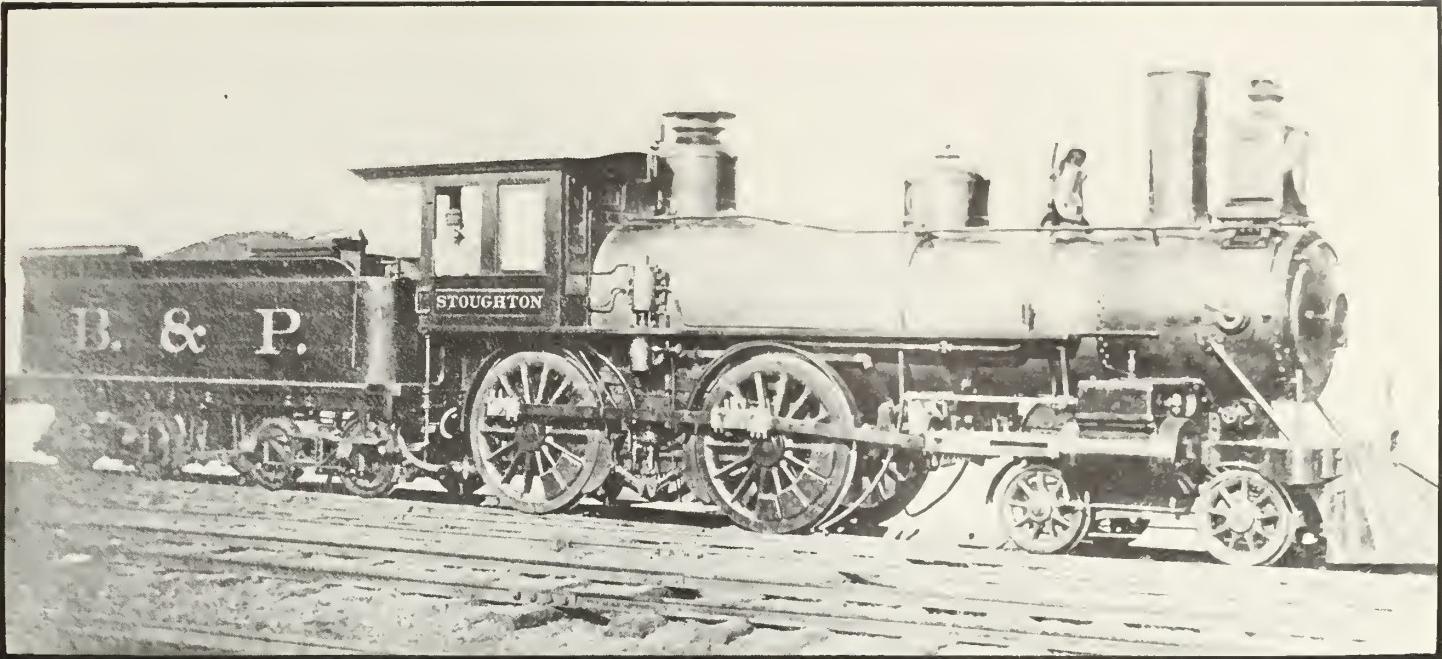
²⁹ Canton Journal, November 25, 1887.

³⁰ Canton Journal, July 19, 1889.

³¹ Canton Journal, January 15, 1976.

Canton Junction Freight Shed, built in 1889, was 75 feet long and 25 feet wide. It was the first of several buildings built in Canton by the Old Colony Railroad. The freight house was destroyed by fire January 10, 1976. Photo date: October, 1974. Photo by Author.





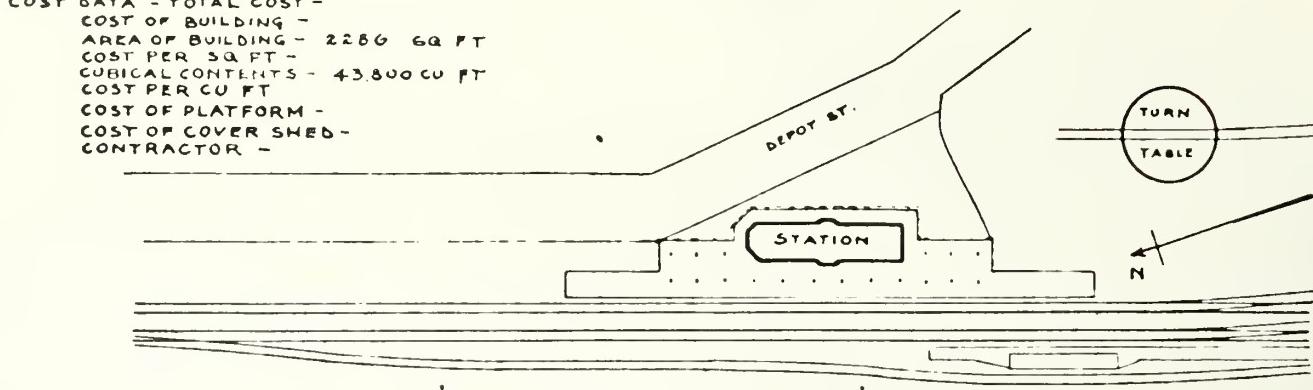
Above: The Stoughton was one of the last locomotives acquired by the Boston and Providence. Built by Hinkley in 1887, it had 60" drivers and weighed 91,850 lbs. Photo date: 1887. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. Below: Canton Junction Freight Shed as viewed from Jackson Street. It would be from this side that horsedrawn wagons and, later, trucks would move freight to and from Canton Junction. Photo date: October, 1974. Photo by Author.



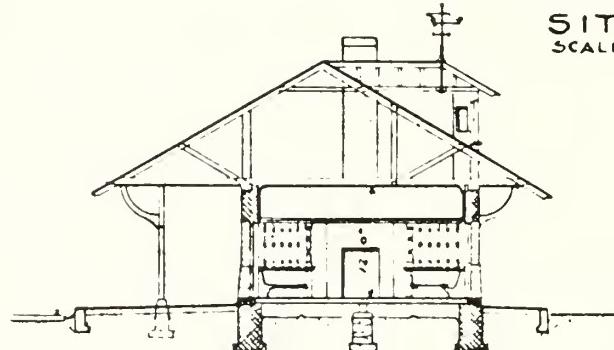
ROOF -
 COVER SHED - WOOD 184 FT
 PLATFORM - CONCRETE 290 FT
 HEATING - STEAM
 LIGHTS - ELECTRIC & GAS
 SEWAGE - TO PUBLIC SEWER
 FINISH -

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION -
 COST DATA - TOTAL COST -
 COST OF BUILDING -
 AREA OF BUILDING - 2286 SQ FT
 COST PER SQ FT -
 CUBICAL CONTENTS - 43,800 CU FT
 COST PER CU FT
 COST OF PLATFORM -
 COST OF COVER SHED -
 CONTRACTOR -

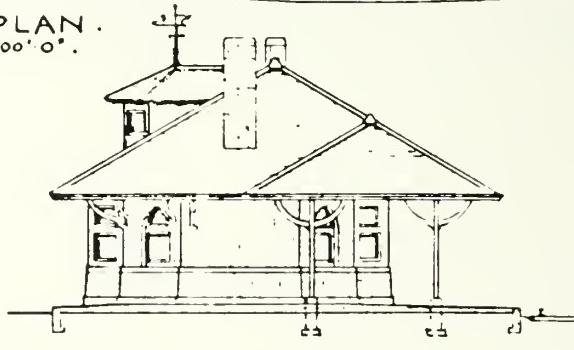
N.Y.N.H.&H.R.R.
 PROVIDENCE DIVISION
 PASSENGER STATION
CANTON JUNCTION, MASS.
 SCALE: 1" : 20 FT
 MARCH 1901.



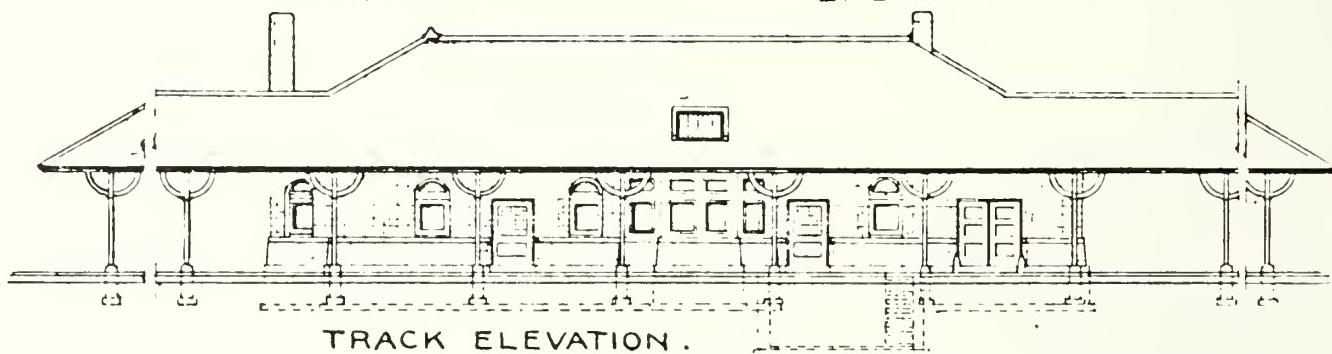
SITE PLAN.
SCALE: 1" : 100' 0".



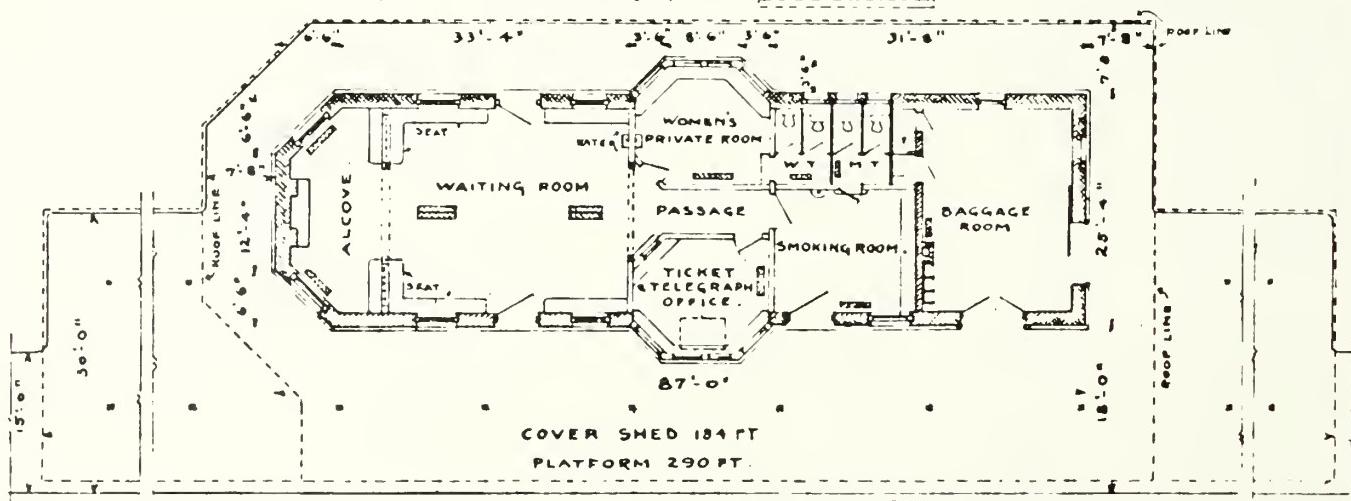
SECTION.



END ELEVATION



TRACK ELEVATION.



PLAN.

117

DRAWN BY: J.J.R.
TRACED BY: J.J.R. OCT 5 1915

FILE NO. 3713.



Springdale Station, with its lovely rural setting, was built in the fall of 1891 at a cost of \$1,200.00. In August of 1919, the station was used in a scene in *Anne of Green Gables*, which starred Mary Miles Minter. The station was demolished on July 1, 1940. Photo date: circa 1930. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

Chapter Five

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1890's

- 1890 Jacob Sillowy dead at age 54. April 9, 1980.
Fall River boat train begins operation via Stoughton Branch. June.
Stoughton Branch double tracked.
- 1891 New signal tower at Canton Junction in operation. April.
Viaduct Masthead first appeared on *Canton Journal*. June 5, 1891.
Canton Station Freight House completed. August.
Springdale Station built. October.
- 1892 New Canton Junction Station construction begins. August.
- 1893 New York, New Haven and Hartford lease control of the Old Colony on March 1, 1893.
New Canton Junction Station opened. April 19.
Old Canton Junction Depot torn down. April.
- 1898 Canton Station grade crossing controversy begins hearings. May.
Postal train wreck. August 8.

On Tuesday, April 9, 1890, Jacob Sillaway died at his home on Chapman Street at age 54 years, eight months and twenty-five days. His death, of course, was not unexpected, yet such was the man's vigor and strength that his friends never could give up the hope that he would recover. During his last illness, he was visited by officials of the Railroad he had served so long. He was survived by a wife and daughter.

Sillaway was the first and, in a sense, the most important local Railroad personality the Town would ever see. In the age when the Station Agent reigned, Sillaway was local nobility. The old order changed, of course, with the termination of the B&P as the operator of the Railroad. The new owners and their building program were quickly changing the entire nature of the local railroad. Now Sillaway — dead; the "Major," the man who represented order, personal service, and a link to the old ways was gone to be buried in his native Providence. An age had truly passed with Sillaway as the modifications around Canton Junction accelerated.

"The new freight house at the Canton depot is complete and, although not very imposing, yet is a commodious structure and will satisfy all the wants for years to come. It is constructed of wood with a slate roof, hard pine floors, is one hundred and eight feet long, thirty-six feet wide, and has a platform eight feet wide on three sides. There are nine doors, each eight feet wide. At the east end is an office for the freight agent." Canton Journal, August 7, 1891. Serve it did — for 83 years before being destroyed by fire on August 14, 1974. Photo date: October, 1971. Photo by Author.

The Stoughton Branch was being double tracked that year of 1890 and, almost by magic, improvements that had been sought for years were appearing. Widened and improved bridges over Forge Pond and Bolivar Street. Gates at the Washington Street crossing long advocated by local people were installed in early September, 1890. Almost without fanfare the reason for all this renovation appeared in the form of the fast-moving Fall River Boat train which began operating through Canton in mid June, 1890.

The new Fall River trains which commenced to run on Monday attract large numbers to the depot every evening. It is the handsomest train of cars ever to run in this part of the country.¹

It must be remembered that the Old Colony operated on the left track and trains began using the double track on the branch during the Fall of 1890. The signal mast north of Canton Junction was moved south of the station in anticipation of relocating the switches off the main line to the Branch line. The

mast signal at Canton was discontinued.

THE REDESIGNING AND REBUILDING OF CANTON JUNCTION

Within one week, the following changes were made:

A new interlocking switch tower is being erected at Canton Junction. The foundation is completed. It is 30 feet long and 15 feet wide and constructed of Fitchburg granite. All the switches at the Junction will be operated from this tower.²

A new station at the Junction will be erected a little north of the present station. Work on it will probably not be commenced until the spring.³

Work between Canton and the Junction is just nearing completion.⁴

A new freight house will be erected at Canton Depot.⁵

A new platform will at once be constructed on the north side of Canton depot.⁶



The new platforms at Canton depot are completed; on the north side there is 400 feet, 200 foot extension on the southwest side.⁷

A wonderfully complete, technically sensitive article from the Canton Journal described the relocation of the track at Canton Junction.

The trackman did good work at Canton Junction Saturday night and Sunday where most of the improvements were in progress. The Stoughton single track which left the main track north of the depot was torn up and the depot platform extended in that direction. The double track from Stoughton was swung onto the main line south of the depot and new switches and signals were placed in position. Through train to Stoughton passed in front of the depot Monday instead of to the rear as has been the case for many years. Other new track render it unnecessary for the Branch trains to go out on the main lines to do their switching which has been considered very objectionable by the Old Colony officials. The double track on the Stoughton branch is in good condition. When the new track to the Revere Copper Works is completed, the freight will be hauled by a freight engine and the oldtime custom of using horses and oxen for this business will be discontinued.⁸

Thus, in this brief article the nature of the redesigned Canton Junction was described.

In contrast to the B&P, the Old Colony made its improvements regardless of the calendar. Typically,

only the frozen ground prevented the Old Colony from putting in new freight tracks at Canton Depot postponing such activity until spring.

The new interlocking switch tower at the Junction was well under way with the structure framed and interior work almost complete by the year's end.⁹

1891

By the middle of April, 1891 the signal tower at Canton Junction was in full operation and would, by all account, add immeasurably to the new track design to improve on the safe operation of the Railroad.

On Monday, May 18th, the Providence Line between Boston and New York reopened for the season of 1891. The fast steamboat express train, complete with Wagner parlor cars, left Park Square Station at Boston at 6:30 p.m. and roared past Canton Junction daily except Sunday, proceeding direct to dockside in Providence where they connected with the steamers, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

The Canton Journal with its June 5, 1891 issue, adopted a new masthead that it was to use for many years. It was a view of the Viaduct with a steam powered passenger train passing over it. The choice of such a subject illustrated the consciousness that the community had developed of the Railroad and the enduring Viaduct. A brief history of the Viaduct and industrial Canton was a part of that issue (Appendix Canton Journal, June 5, 1891).

All the improvements made to the Railroad's physical plant could not prevent the occasional mishap that occurred on such a heavily utilized thoroughfare. The gravel train operating from the pit at Springdale derailed at Canton Station at noontime, Tuesday, May 21. The engine was badly damaged, the cowcatcher telescoping with a baggage car, and four loaded gravel cars were thrown from the track. The wrecking train was called and, by five p.m., everything was righted. The train was being sidetracked to make way for passenger trains. The passenger traffic was not delayed and, fortunately, no one was injured.¹⁰

Nor were all persons happy with the level of freight service the Town was receiving; for in July, the local businessmen petitioned the Old Colony Railroad requesting an earlier freight train to Canton. The freight had been arriving at any time in the afternoon, frequently as late as 4:30 p.m., which caused, according to the petition, considerable inconvenience to area merchants.¹¹

NEW CANTON STATION FREIGHT HOUSE

In August of 1891, the new Freight House to the rear of Canton Station was completed. Its construction had been commenced in May.

This new freight house at Canton Station was almost twice as large as the freight house built at the Junction two years earlier. The availability of

Canton Junction Station opened April 19, 1893. Of Milford granite with brownstone trimming, it cost the Old Colony \$12,000.00 to build. Not architecturally inspiring, it has survived longer than any other railroad structure locally, with the notable exception of the Viaduct. Photo date: circa 1900. Collection of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.



more land in the area of Canton Station would account for the difference in size.

This structure was destroyed by a spectacular fire in the early morning hours of August 14, 1974.

Hot Blaze Demolishes Railroad Shed

A hot blaze engulfed the old wood-framed railroad shed located behind the Norfolk County Bank early Wednesday morning between 1 and 4 a.m. The building, leased from the New Haven Railroad by the Plymouth Rubber Company, housed old machinery, and occasionally a weary person looking for a roof to cover his head.

Flames burst through the roof, shooting fifty and sixty feet into the air. Stoughton Fire Department assisted, covering the central station while the Canton men were at the blaze.

Several phone calls and a box call from Ames Ave., and Washington St., alerted the Fire Department, who worked hard and fast to contain the fire to the building.

At one point, there was speculation that a person might be inside the intensely involved frame, but a thorough search which lasted until 11:45 a.m. has not found any body.¹²

NEW SPRINGDALE STATION

In the fall, of 1891, the Old Colony decided to replace what appears to have been a small unmanned shelter or flagstop at Springdale. The presence of an older structure probably dates again to the construction of the Stoughton Branch. The Springdale "Station" is present on H.F. Walling's 1855 map of the Town. Again, no photo of this early building has been found.

New Depot at Springdale

The Old Colony Railroad Company has commenced the erection of a depot at Springdale. It will be a wooden structure with a brick foundation, thirty-two feet long and twenty-two wide, and one story high. It will contain a ladies' and gentleman's room, ticket office and a bay window. A station agent will be permanently located there, the appointment not yet having been made. The structure will be very tasteful in appearance and will cost \$1,200.¹³

The new station itself at Springdale was not constructed without incident. Within a week of its completion in mid-November, a tramp fell asleep in the old station which still stood for the time

being along side the new structure. The tramp's pipe set a small fire in the older building. Luckily, Engineer Lyons of the water pumping station arrived in time to extinguish the fire and save both structures.

With local fanfare, the little rural depot opened in November with Fred Guild appointed what appears to be the first full-time station agent at Springdale. Canton Station Agent at this time was Mr. A.E. Wood, appointed in October.

PLANS FOR NEW CANTON JUNCTION DEPOT

Before the Springdale Station was completed, an announcement was made by the Old Colony that a new depot was to be constructed at Canton Junction. It is ironic that the busiest depot in the Town was the very last to receive attention during this period of rebuilding. The plan called for the new depot to be located a little north of where the old one stood and closer to the street. The structure was to be of stone, possess all the modern conveniences and cost \$12,000. Speculation had it that the old engine house (single stall) was to be sold and removed and the turntable moved nearer the switch tower. People were admittedly anxious to see the work commence and the Railroad assured everyone that spring would find it building.

One last interesting note from 1891 is that the Old Colony found that it had best install an electric bell (indicating an approaching train) in the flaghouse at Canton Depot. Now that the man at Washington Street had crossing gates to lower, he required more notice than his eye or ear could provide. The fast-moving Fall River trains in particular bore down on the crossing at a fearful rate of speed.

PROGRESS ON CANTON JUNCTION STATION

After protracted delays, the railroad began construction of the New Canton Junction Station in August, 1892. The work was forecast to take five months. Milford granite was to be used in construction along with brownstone trimming. The new building would be of modern design and be some ninety feet in length.

NEW HAVEN TAKE OVER

Change was again in the air in the first months of 1893. The earliest indications to Canton townspeople came from those who followed the stock market and found that Old Colony stock, which had been static for years, was in the process of a rapid increase. A climb of thirty points in a few weeks

was an indication that, for the second time in five years, the control of the Railroad was in the process of change. Local people were saddened by the passing of the B&P, but now they were truly threatened by that thundering giant of a corporation known as the "Consolidated." In effect, it would be only a matter of months before the "Consolidated," more accurately known as the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, would gain control of the Old Colony in mid 1893. The Town could look back at five years of astonishing improvements in the Railroad's physical plant. Virtually every major change to modernize the Railroad had taken place during the five year period of Old Colony control. The local people were, on the whole, well satisfied with the Old Colony which had given fast and frequent service. The equipping of the road with electric signals and interlocking signals, as well as steam heated cars, were all the latest in safety and comfort. The New Haven, however, was viewed as primarily interested in growth and corporate expansion and, of course, handsome profits. The golden age of railroading at least for Canton was slowly coming to an end.

In March of 1893, an old rumor was again circulated that the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company was about to be purchased by the Railroad and converted to car shops. Even the usually enthusiastic *Canton Journal* could not find any truth or substance in what they referred to as this "perennial plant."¹⁴

It is interesting to note that there was speculation as to the sale of the K.I.M. factory, which was still very much in operation. Local promoters and matchmakers were, it seems, attuned to the health of every local enterprise and were sensitive to the K.I.M.'s future.

On April 19, 1893, the new depot at Canton Junction was opened to the public. The depot wasn't finished, but the move was necessary due to the removal of the old station in order that the new structure could be completed.¹⁵

The month of April also saw the New Haven assert itself operationally in announcing that it planned to erect signal towers along the line between Boston and Providence during the summer and operate the road under a system of block signals, the same type in service between New York and Providence.¹⁶ This work, however, wouldn't be accomplished for five years. The announcement served more of an assertion of control.¹⁷ The full impact of the takeover was registered in the following newspaper article:

"Old Colony" will probably disappear from the Railroad car rather

more quickly than "Boston & Providence" did. The shops are rushed with work repainting the cars, one freight alone this week taking sixteen to the South Boston shops.¹⁸

Since the N.Y., N.H.&H. Corporation assumed control of the Old Colony system, it has made a change in the payroll of its employees. The change will add quite a bit materially to the salaries of conductors, passenger brakemen, etc. Freight handlers pay will be lowered.¹⁹

A very interesting view of corporate change was provided by a news item from the *Bridgewater Independent* of July 21, 1893.

The public will be sorry to learn that one of the greatest losses by the absorption of the Old Colony by the N.Y., N.H.&H., is the abandoning of the gardening department which has the care of the station grounds along the line. For several years, the Old Colony has been beautifying the grounds by setting out flowers and shrubs, keeping the lawns trim, a feature that has added greatly to the pleasure of traveling along the line. All of this will soon be done away with. The N.Y., N.H.&H., not believing in aestheticism, believing in dollars and not beauty, have discontinued the department, discharging the score of men employed in the work, and have abandoned the hothouses at Halifax, which are now for sale.²⁰

Anti-railroad sentiment had its origins in such early economy moves. Many people again reacted in November of 1893 when in a "spirit of economy" the N.H. discontinued a train that had operated "since the road was opened." The train in question was the train leaving Boston at 2:05 p.m. Also dropped were the morning express leaving Canton Junction at 9:45 a.m., and the mid-afternoon Stoughton Branch trains. A "monster" petition resulted, protesting the service cuts.²¹ Townspeople now knew, however, they were truly in the hands of a monopoly. They were no longer dealing with a sympathetic, if not affluent Boston & Providence, nor were they talking with an expeditious Old Colony. Gone were the days when the Town's industries generated a high percentage of the Railroad's traffic, that boast of only a few years ago now seemed almost laughable. Their foe was so removed from being concerned about service that the locals' efforts were completely wasted. High finance and power dominated J.P. Morgan and the men who ran his companies and who could not care less about a Town being angered, inconvenienced and upset over service cuts. An immediate panacea, thought

some, would be an electric railway, and a roaring letter to the editor in the January 12, 1894 issue of the *Canton Journal* stated wholesale dissatisfaction with the Railroad passenger service.

Several years would pass before an electric railway would be constructed locally. On a positive note, the railroad business had never been better. The Fall River Line's new steamer Priscilla took place on the line in late June of 1894, becoming the largest and finest of that company's handsome fleet. The next summer was to see the Fall River Line trains running through Canton nightly, with the first express section running with eleven to thirteen well-filled cars every night.²²

September of 1895 was the year the Railroad changed its style and began to operate its train on the right hand track. It was the last section of New England where a Railroad (Old Colony) ran on the left.²³

LOCAL PROBLEMS

The question of grade crossings was, of course, a continuing source of irritation to the Town. The two main topics of such discussion were the K.I.M. crossing at Washington Street and the Canton Station crossing. These grade crossings posed separate problems. The K.I.M. crossing was primarily one of discomfort while bouncing across it in a carriage. The Canton Station cross-

The original arch was designed to handle highway traffic such as the traveller on foot or a horse and cart. The circle encloses a stonecutter's mark. Photo date: circa 1890. Collection of Canton Historical Society.





On Monday morning, August 8, 1898 at 5:10 a.m. the Postal Express, which had left New York just before midnight, split a switch in the area where the Stoughton Branch leaves the main line. Three men were killed in the locomotive, and five men injured in the derailment. Photo date: August 8, 1898. Photo by Fred Endicott, Collection of Canton Historical Society.

ing was, of course, much more serious in that more than a score of trains passed through the Canton station crossing — several, such as the Fall River Line Boat Train, at great speed.

The new owners, it seems, during this period performed only the most necessary maintenance.

—July 30, 1897

The Railroad men have been busy this week putting in a new turntable at the Junction, the old one being disabled by a crack in the casting. This table was put in some 18 years ago (1879) and has done a great deal of service and suffered many vicissitudes. It is said to weigh over twenty tons stripped of wood work and track, and it was quite a job to get it out of the pit.²⁴

—May 19, 1899

Men have been busy this week tearing off the shingles on the "Roundhouse" at Canton Junction and covering the roof with roofing paper. We are informed that these shingles were put on when the house was first erected to shelter the little "Stoughton," early in the seventies. They have done good service.²⁵

THE GREAT GRADE CROSSING CONTROVERSY

By 1898, the subject of the Canton Station grade crossing had become the major local issue confronting the Town. On the 12th of January, 1898, the Superior Court of Dedham appointed a commission to decide on the abolition of the grade crossing at Canton Station. It was firmly felt that the Railroad would elevate the tracks and pass over Washington Street. Speculation began as to where the depot could be relocated, and it was hoped that work would be underway by summer. The figure \$100,000 was used as the cost of such an undertaking with the Town subject to pay 10%.

THE DECISION AND LOCAL REACTION

Rather than seeing an elevated rail spanning Washington Street, the Commission decided against the Town and recommended that the highway be relocated and elevated across the Railroad tracks. The Townspeople were aghast. It was an almost classic example of a weak Commission being "railroaded."

The Town had been stung badly. The move to have the grade crossing removed had been such a wonderful old saw, it seemed only logical that with the increased use of the doubletracked branch, a grade separation would be in order and forthcoming.

The Town of Canton had taken on Morgan's New Haven Railroad. It wasn't even a skirmish to the Railroad's lawyers. It was, however, a staggering blow to the Town's innocence.

1898 was the year of the first photographically documented railroad accident. On August 8, 1898, there occurred at Canton Junction what is referred to as the Postal Train Wreck. A vivid account of the accident follows:

"Death on the Rail: The Postal Train Wreck"

Great excitement Monday morning, three men instantly killed, thousands visit the scene.

People in the neighborhood of the junction were just preparing to take up their week's round of labor when, about ten minutes after 5:00, a terrible roar, followed by a fearful crash, directed attention towards the junction depot, whence arose a mingled cloud of dust and steam.

Those nearest the scene quickly realized that a terrible accident had occurred and, as the quickest means of obtaining aid, Box 93 of the fire alarm was pulled and in a very few minutes the firemen were hurrying to the scene. Fortunately, their services were not required, but the call was unanimously endorsed and the prompt response appreciated.

The derailed train is known on the road as the Postal Express and was made up of four postal cars. It left New York at about 11:00 Sunday night and was on its regular time. At New London, engine 839 (engineer, Frank Sheldon, of Providence, fireman, F.T. Knowlton, of Chelsea) was attached to the train and at Mansfield, James Schuteldt, of that place, got up on the engine to ride into the city to take charge of his engine on the gravel train.

The morning was clear and, when crossing the viaduct, Engineer Sheldon could easily discern the signal which indicated a clear track. Apparently there was no warning to the doomed men. As a rule, with a clear track express trains slide over the bridge at fifteen to twenty miles an hour and, on reaching the straight track, the throttle is opened and, by the time the depot is reached, the speed is practically doubled. This appears to have been the case this morning. It seems doubtful the steam was shut off before the switch was reached. Those in the cars felt no application of the brakes, and the few lookers-on were too horrified by the sudden catastrophe to be able to recollect what was the condition at the moment the engine left the rails.

The signals were all set for a straight track, but it was evident from the examination of the rails that the crossover switch just north of the tower was nearly or quite set to cross onto the outward track. Some who looked at it shortly after the accident say it was set clear over, others claim that there was a slight gap between the rails, showing that it had been partly moved. A pin, or rather a double-headed rivet, in one of the rods that should have moved the switch had cracked and dropped out, allowing the rod to pull out of the connection. The crack was said to be somewhat rusted and probably to have commenced to yield some time back, but it was in a place where detection would have been difficult, if not impossible, without taking the connection apart.

However, the rail turned the lo-

comotive from the straight track and, the momentum being too great to allow the heavy machine to be abruptly turned from its course, it plunged diagonally across the switch and dived, like an immense plow, into the space between the tracks. The road bed was excavated to the depth of a yard for some fifty feet, the planking in front of the baggage room carried away, and leaving the forward truck in front of the depot, the machine fell on its side and, with well-nigh everything stripped from boiler and frame, lay, blowing off steam, just north of the depot on the outward track. The first car of the train followed the engine till its fall, when it, also, turned on its side, falling over on the turnout west of the outbound track and slid by the tender, cutting off the top of the cab and catching one of the unfortunate men on the engine under its forward end, crushing him into the ground beneath it. The other two men were found beneath the ruined cab. In this car were five mail clerks who were thrown around, to use the expression of one of them, "like dice in a box." All were more or less injured and, their wounds being temporarily dressed, were taken to Boston on a train at 6:30 to the hospital, where they were attended to and, with the exception of Buckland, sent home. The latter remained in the hospital, but is not thought to be dangerously hurt. The trucks of

all the cars, the gas tanks, brake cylinders, and all the rigging underneath the cars stuck in the trench dug by the locomotive in front of the baggage door, and only the forward locomotive truck passed the spot. The second car laid right side up diagonally across the three tracks, while the third formed almost a right angle with its front end lifted high on the wrecked trucks, lacking only a few inches of driving into the shelter roof of the station. The fourth car alone remained on its trucks, but the forward one was broken to such an extent as to require heavy chains to hold it together, and was terribly strained. The track and interlocking signals were torn up and scattered in every direction.

The work of rescuing the imprisoned mail clerks was commenced without delay and, by the time the firemen reached the scene, all were in safety save the three enginemen, who were too plainly beyond help.

The wrecking train arrived about 6:00 with the steam derrick and, after taking out the bodies (which were viewed by medical examiner Faxon, of Stoughton, and then taken in charge by undertaker Spencer), the work of clearing up the wreck was commenced. A large force of men was brought out by the 7:00 train to help in the track-laying.

Trains were switched around the wreck through the freightyard,

*The public was very curious and flocked to the Junction to see the derailment.
Photo date: August 8, 1898. Collection of Author.*



causing but slight delay on the main line, but branch passengers were obliged to change cars and walk around the wreck all day. Superintendent McAlpine and many other high officials spent the day on the spot.

An immense crowd gathered, coming from a considerable distance, to view the ruins and the camera was much in evidence. The work seemed to progress rather slowly through the day, but by early morning Tuesday the tracks were cleared. Shortly after 8:00, the wrecking train returned to the city, leaving the interlocking men to restore the switch and signal system.

It was the most complete wreck that ever occurred at the junction and it is only owing to the character of the train that the loss of life was so small. It was also a great testimony to the advantages of the vestibule platform, as it is evident that with the ordinary platform, the cars would have ground each other to splinters. The work of the steam derrick excited much commendation and the railroad hands, generally, are entitled to much credit for the manner in which they worked under the broiling sun, hampered to a considerable extent by the crowd and bothered with inquisitive questions, yet, with rare exceptions, courteous and good-natured. From the Superintendent to the waterboy, they treated the visitors (unwelcome as they must have been), with very few exceptions, as though they were giving an exhibition rather than engaged in a harassing and exhausting work. It is also a consolation to know that, in all human probability, this was one of the very few wrecks that can really be called an accident and not due to man's negligence or incapacity.²⁶

In January of 1899 the Town Meeting warrant of that year included an Article "To see if the Town will not vote to instruct the Selectmen to petition the Railroad Commissioners to compel the N.Y., N.H. & H. RR Co. to widen the arch under the Viaduct on Neponset Street in Canton and to employ council, if necessary, to represent the case."²⁷

This is the first known attempt to approach the problem of a second or enlarged arch in the Viaduct. This issue was obscured by the more volatile grade crossing controversy and no serious action was taken on either side.

The year, decade and century closed on a high note as the Railroad moved into its new, ultra-modern South Station, leaving the Park Square Station behind in September of that year and

the first passengers were moving over the new Blue Hill Street Railway by November of 1899. Thus closed one of the most eventful decades in Canton's history.

To some degree, the lessons learned in the negative decision received in the grade crossing case were just preliminary jolts. Canton in the next ten years was to be subjected to tremendous economic upheaval.

¹Canton Journal, June 20, 1890.

²Canton Journal, November 14, 1890.

³Canton Journal, November 14, 1890.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Canton Journal, November 21, 1890.

⁷Canton Journal, November 26, 1890.

⁸Canton Journal, November 21, 1890.

⁹Canton Journal, December 5, 1890.

¹⁰Canton Journal, May 24, 1891.

¹¹Canton Journal, July 31, 1891.

¹²Canton Journal, August 15, 1974.

¹³Canton Journal, October 9, 1891.

¹⁴Canton Journal, March 3, 1893.

¹⁵Canton Journal, April 21, 1893.

¹⁶Canton Journal, April 14, 1893.

¹⁷Canton Journal, June 30, 1893.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Canton Journal, July 21, 1893.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Canton Journal, November 24, 1893 and December 1, 1893.

²²Canton Journal, August 9, 1895.

²³Canton Journal, September 27, 1895.

²⁴Canton Journal, July 30, 1897.

²⁵Canton Journal, May 19, 1899.

²⁶Canton Journal, August 12, 1898.

²⁷Canton Journal, February 24, 1899.



Above: The loss of life would have been much higher if the derailed train had been a passenger train instead of a four-car postal express. Photo date: August 8, 1898. Photo by Fred Endicott, Collection of Canton Historical Society. Below: This accident was the first to be photographically documented. This photo includes areas around the junction not normally photographed. In addition to the wrecked train in front of the station, the station agent's house, water tower, windmill and single stall engine house are seen. To the left of the wreck is the signal and switch tower with its window awnings. Photo date: August 8, 1898. Photo by Fred Endicott, Collection of Canton Historical Society.



Canton Junction



Revere Copper Company rail yard. Large building in the center is the Sheet Mill. Rail shipping and receiving dock is at left behind watchman and his dog. This was the first industry served by rail in Canton. Photo date 1908. Collection of author.

Chapter Six

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1900's

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1900 | Revere Copper Company Closes |
| | Town Loses Canton Station Grade Crossing Case |
| | New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Announces Plans to Build Vast Repair Shops at Readville |
| 1902-03 | Fuel Crises |
| 1906 | Springdale Finishing Company Builds Sidetrack |
| 1907 | Kinsley Iron and Machine Company Closes Its Doors |
| 1909 | Revere Copper and K.I.M. Properties Sold |

The new century was barely underway when the Revere Copper Company announced in February of 1900 that it was ending its Canton operation. This move was a result of a consolidation the previous year between the Revere Copper Company, New Bedford Copper Company and Taunton Copper Company. The new corporation was organized as the Taunton-New Bedford Copper Company. Ironically, transportation was singled out as the reason the Canton facility was closed. The new corporation stated that the freight advantages of being located on tide water at New Bedford and Taunton imposed an insurmountable handicap on the landlocked Canton operation.

In a sense, a belated obituary of the Revere Copper Company appeared in the form of a real estate brochure that was produced when the property was disposed of at an auction in 1909.

REVERE COPPER CO. Established 1801

The site of the Revere Copper Works was first utilized as a water power privilege in 1717, when the Colonists built here a corn mill and erected a house for the occupancy of an "HONEST" miller. Later the property was taken by the Colonies and a plant erected for the manufacture of power during the Revolution. In 1780 it was purchased by Paul Revere, and in 1801 he established a plant for the man-

ufacture of copper, bell metal and ship fastenings, etc., (incorporated 1828 Revere Copper Co.) and the business continued and grew and never ceased, always in the ownership and under the immediate management of the Revere Family, until 1900, when the Revere Copper Co., the Taunton Copper Mfg. Co. and the New Bedford Copper Co. were merged and incorporated as the Taunton-New Bedford Copper Co. From 1801 to 1900 there were constantly and continually employed from 75 to 150 or more employees, and the business was thriving, successful and prosperous up to the time of the merger, when the plant was



Above and Left: Two views of the Dedham Road Station. Typical examples of shelters provided at flagstops. Photo date circa 1900. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Above: View of foundry. Collection of author. **Right:** The famous Revere Coach used by the Revere Copper Company and the Revere family to travel between Canton Junction and the mill. Coach was pulled by a horse and is pictured in the early photo of the original Canton (Junction) Station. Photo date 1908. Collection of author.



closed down. During the Civil War there were cast at this plant between seven and eight hundred brass cannon for the Government. This particular water power privilege has been an important feature in the four epochal periods of the history of America — selected in the beginning by the Colonists to make grist of their corn — used during the American Revolution by the Colonial Government for

the manufacture of its powder — used during the Civil War by the National Government for the manufacture of brass cannon — in the comparatively recent years, during the country's wonderful and important business expansion and growth, ever known in the business world because of its high repute in the manufacture of copper and yellow metal sheathing. Today — in a choice location less

than 16 miles from the business center of the City of Boston — a valuable, exceptionally reliable and absolutely controlled water power privilege with no flowage charges, 670 acres of deep lake, reservoir and pond storage, on the main line of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, its own spur track (1/3 mile) on its own land to Canton Junction, also a small water power privilege and buildings, leased and in operation, on the natural waterway between the property and Massapoag Pond. One room of the present office building was part of the plant of the original powder mill. Part of the original Paul Revere residence at the works is now upon the premises. There are members of the Revere Family still residing near the property. In one of the buildings is an original Hunnewell hand fire engine in a most excellent condition and state of preservation. The summer car and the winter bus used by the Revere Family to take them from their residence by horse power over the spur tracks to Canton Junction, are upon the premises and included in the sale. For a great many years the Company sent all its freight over the railroad tracks, between trains to and from Boston in horse drawn cars.¹

The Revere Copper closing was followed by other reverses. The long awaited but negative ruling on the Washington Street grade crossing arrived in July of 1900. The townspeople can be forgiven for lamenting in late October that Readville, not Canton, had been chosen as the site for the New Haven Railroad's new repair shops. It didn't make much sense to have a road called Copper Yard Lane any longer, so in April of 1901 it was changed to Revere Street.

NEWS ITEMS 1902

1902 is a good year to select for illustrating with certain news stories carrying the full flavor of this part of Canton's history.

Killed by the Fall River Express

James Meikles, a section hand, the victim, in the full prime of life, a fine specimen of strong and rugged manhood James Meikles, a section hand on the Stoughton Branch of the N.Y., N.H. & H. RR and a resident of Canton met with almost instant death Tuesday evening.

Meikles, in the performance of his duties, had gone with a broom to sweep the rapidly gathering snow from about the switches at the junction of the main line with the Stoughton Branch, a short dis-



Above: Last remaining building of the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company. It was the Axle Shop, and it is located at 639-641 Washington Street. The K.I.M. spur ran alongside the left end of the building, crossing Washington Street, which is in the foreground. The building was built prior to 1850. Photo date 1974. Photo by author.

tance from Canton Junction Station, but a few moments before the Fall River Express train due at the Junction at 6:24 arrived. It is thought by his fellow employees on the road that he must have forgotten about the train. On sweeping away the snow he dropped his broom across the rail of the branch track and as he stooped to reclaim it the fast train was upon him, and he was struck in the head and shoulder. The fearful blow crushed the poor fellow's head, and death was instantaneous for, although he was yet breathing when those who witnessed the accident reached his body, he was unconscious and soon expired. The body was taken to the baggage room at the Junction and the Medical Examiner was notified. He was considered a faithful and careful employee.²

We hear considerable complaint about the 7:04 train to Boston evenings. It is said that it is seldom on time and frequently very late. Passengers, wishing to attend the theaters are compelled to take the express shortly before 6 or lose much of the play.³

French — The Gatekeeper

The genial and urbane gatekeeper at the Washington Street crossing of the N.Y., N.H.&H. RR was called upon early Monday morning last at his post of duty and presented by members of the Pasadena Club with an Hibernian regalia, Mr. Charles P. Grimes making the presentation. His love for his native soil is ever green and Mr. French was well pleased with the gift, at once donned the emerald headgear and celebrated St. Patrick's Day by wearing it about his duties. His unvarying politeness to his many friends on all occasions was particularly noticeable last Monday, for Mr. French lost no occasion to lift his chapeau and make a sweeping courtesy to everyone who accosted him in friendly greeting.⁴

WRECK AT THE JUNCTION Engine #523 in a Promiscuous Heap at Spaulding's Bridge

The Mansfield freight due at Canton Junction at about 12:30 p.m. reached there all right today. The freight was an unusually heavy one of box and flat cars, the latter

loaded with coal and lumber. In taking on or leaving freight at this station the train ran on to the side-track which terminates at Spaulding's Bridge. This track is down grade, and the heavy freight proved too strong for the engine, and she was unable to hold it, and she was pushed with tremendous force into the embankment. The result was, of course, a wreck for Engine #523. The boiler was forced from the tender and stood almost perpendicular in the air, while the cab was snapped off carrying engineer Murteslang and fireman Pinkham with it. Fortunately they nor anyone was injured in this accident. The wrecking train was sent for and soon reached the scene of the accident, getting immediately to work. The boiler which was for a time poised in the air, toppled to the east and blocked the outward track for some time so that travel from Boston has been somewhat uncertain as regards the schedule. The inward track was kept clear, however. None of the freight cars left the track. Crowds of our citizens have been and are now at the scene of the wreck viewing wrecking operations.⁵

For those who enjoy riding on the trolley cars, there are a number of very enjoyable routes now open that can be traversed at a small expense of time and money. One of the prettiest for those who delight in the woods and fields is that through Norwood, Walpole and Mansfield, returning either by rail or via Easton and Brockton.

On Sunday afternoons all the lines run frequent cars in the afternoon and in a few weeks it is likely that half hour time will be in use on all days.

Leaving Canton by Blue Hill Road a half hour brings us to Norwood Village a few steps from the line running to Walpole. Ten cents is collected for this portion of the trip. A car quickly takes us into the neighboring town for five cents more, and it is but a step to the car for Foxboro and Mansfield. The open cars on this line are very easy riding, and the trip through villages and alternating fields is extremely pleasant. Two fares are asked to carry us to Mansfield Station, the running time is very close to an hour.

If desirous of going farther, just across the railroad track the traveler will find a comfortable car which will take him in about an hour to Easton via Raynham and Easton Furnace for fifteen cents, and hence by close connection the trip

home can be made by way of Brockton for a couple of dimes. An hour and a half is required from Easton exclusive of the wait at Stoughton, which is likely to be the longest of the trip. The fares are sixty cents, and the trip can be made in about four hours and fifteen minutes if the closest connections possible at Stoughton are made.⁶

The Stone Factory

Renewed interest is felt in the "Old Stone Factory" from the rapid progress being made in the renovation by the Neponset Woolen Mills Co.

The building was erected in 1824, together with some of the tenements in the neighborhood. We are informed that the "Willow Road" (Neponset St. Ed.) was built at this time to afford a route across the meadows to connect with the turnpike through Dedham and Boston, that being the shortest route, and the Boston & Providence not then having been thought of.

It is stated that no expense was spared in the building and the monthly payroll was about \$7,000, a large sum for those days. But after a three-year struggle, this company failed.

Another company called the "Neponset Woolen Company" then occupied the mill for a few years, but met a similar fate, and so did a third, and for some years the mill was idle.

In 1843, the machinery was changed for cotton machinery and this manufacture continued until 1877 when another change to print clothes took place, but lasted only a couple of years. In 1883, the property was bought for a bleachery, which business has since occupied the mill until the present change.

The old mill is good for many years to come, and it is to be hoped that continual and successful operation may mark its future existence.⁷

There was, however, a much darker side to life in the early years of this century. Poverty was never far away. The Town, which had been early in changing from an agrarian to an industrial economy and then to an outlying suburb, was particularly sensitive to regional conditions. There were few families in Town that could be considered even remotely self-sustaining in the sense of the old New England farm-cash crop syndrome. Welfare programs were non-existent, with the exception of the "Poor Farm" and the occasional basket of food and buckets

of coal that were usually provided to the needy. Families needing assistance customarily received help from other branches of the family, neighbors or church. The Town itself was, in effect, a last resort.

The job mobility of the times was minimal with good, steady jobs retained for decades. The closing of an industry such as the Revere Copper Company had a very serious effect.

This period was no stranger to an energy crisis. A widespread coal miners' strike in 1902-03 caused severe hardship throughout the country. During the winter prices were driven up, only to have the surplus increase and prices soften just prior to spring. In what must be the most arrogant and socially insensitive article ever to appear in the local paper, the "Coal Situation" is discussed with amusement.

The Coal Situation

Passengers at the Junction are much amused by the various shifts of the boys to obtain coal from various sources around the depot. Almost anytime during the day, one or two can be seen mining in the waste heap near the engine house while at intervals of an hour or so a squad will be seen scouring the tracks in search of lumps from the cars when switching. In the aggregate, considerable fuel is picked up — those that in ordinary time would be neglected, while the boys fight over a lump of coal like dogs over a bone.⁸

At the height of the shortage, it was reported that only six carloads of coal had arrived in Town during the first week of January, 1903. By February, the price of anthracite

had dropped to \$12 per ton and supply was increasing. Soft coal was now selling for \$9 a ton, with the price expected to go lower. As the winter and crisis ended, the episode was referred to as a "panic" for the first time. It must be remembered that coal was the basis of heating both home and industry.

The K.I.M. had shrewdly weathered the coal shortage by placing a large order prior to the strike. In April of 1903, the remainder of their order arrived in the form of 1100 tons of soft coal.

Summer was most welcome that year, and a large number of people gathered at the Junction on Tuesday, June 16, 1903 to watch the "Liberty Bell" train whisk through. The bell was displayed on a car decorated with flags and flowers.⁹

It was noted later that year that through freight business on the New Haven road, as it was now referred to, had become increasing steadily to a point where it became a problem running passenger trains around the slow moving, straining freights climbing the Sharon grade. As late as the 1940's, Joe Danahy, a Canton historian, can recall hearing the heavy steam locomotives slip to a halt on what is the steepest (ruling) grade on the New Haven Railroad. According to Joe, the stalled freight would signal by whistle to Canton Junction where word would be relayed to Readville, where a helper engine would be dispatched to assist the stalled train to the summit. It is not my understanding that helper engines were used regularly on such freight movements.



Early view of freight traffic across viaduct. Photo date circa 1900. Collection of author.

In January of 1904, the K.I.M. Company sought and received permission to use a steam locomotive on its industrial spur, but it is undetermined if one was ever used. As of June 1904, the duties of hauling cars still fell to the reliable eight oxen. Outbound shipments from K.I.M. during this period included 50 tons of slag each week destined for Pennsylvania. At this time, 235 men were employed at the Iron Works.

During the summer, it was reported that bales of cotton were arriving at the Junction destined for the Knitted Mattress Company on Chapman Street. Another change was the replacement of the Lexington Print Works by the Springdale Finishing Company, which dyed canvas, in September of 1903. This new industry would necessitate the construction of an industrial spur in October 1906. Earlier that year, the Eureka Silk Company moved to Connecticut, thus ending 67 years of operation in Canton.

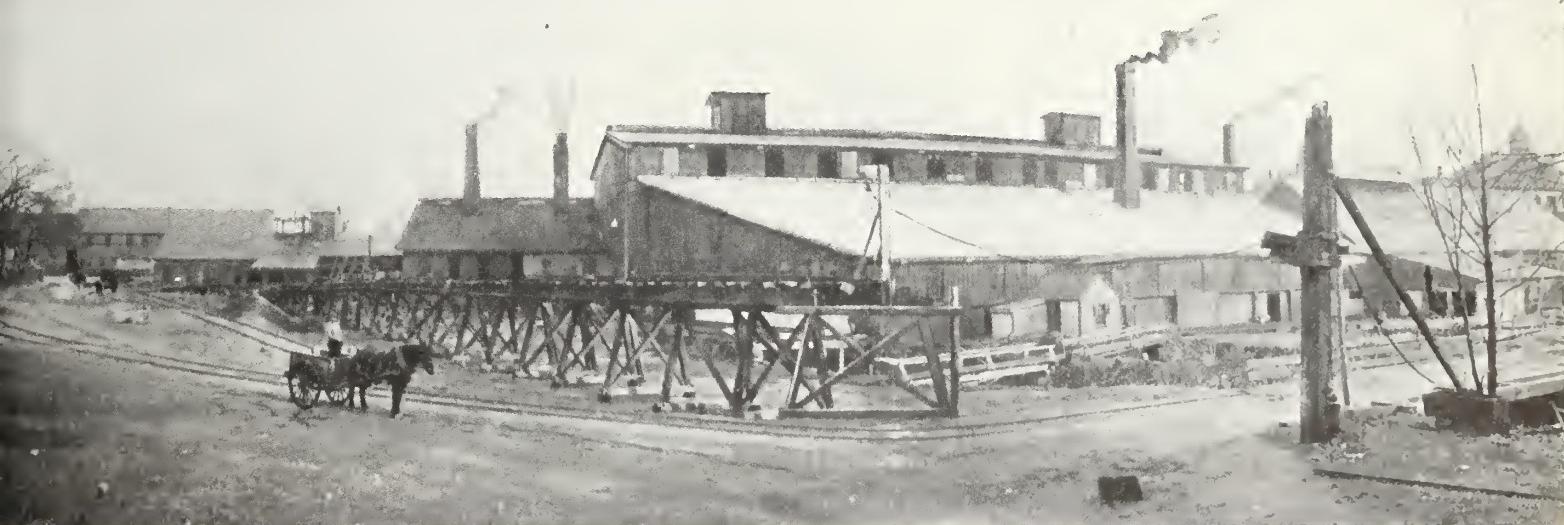
The issue of grade crossings again became news — this time in regard to the elimination along the main line — Dedham Road being the only main line grade crossing in Canton. There were no grade crossings between Boston and the Green Lodge Street crossing, which then lay just across the Neponset River in Westwood. The feelings were that the main line would soon be four tracked between Boston and Providence. There was talk as well that the line would soon be electrified. Hearings were begun on abolishing the Dedham Road crossing in May of 1907. A year earlier, the N.Y., N.H. & H. Railroad had shifted their signal tower near the Dedham Road crossing to a point just north of the crossing with the intention of placing a gate at the crossing to be operated from the tower instead of the then current arrangement, which was not detailed but was in all likelihood a crossing tender.

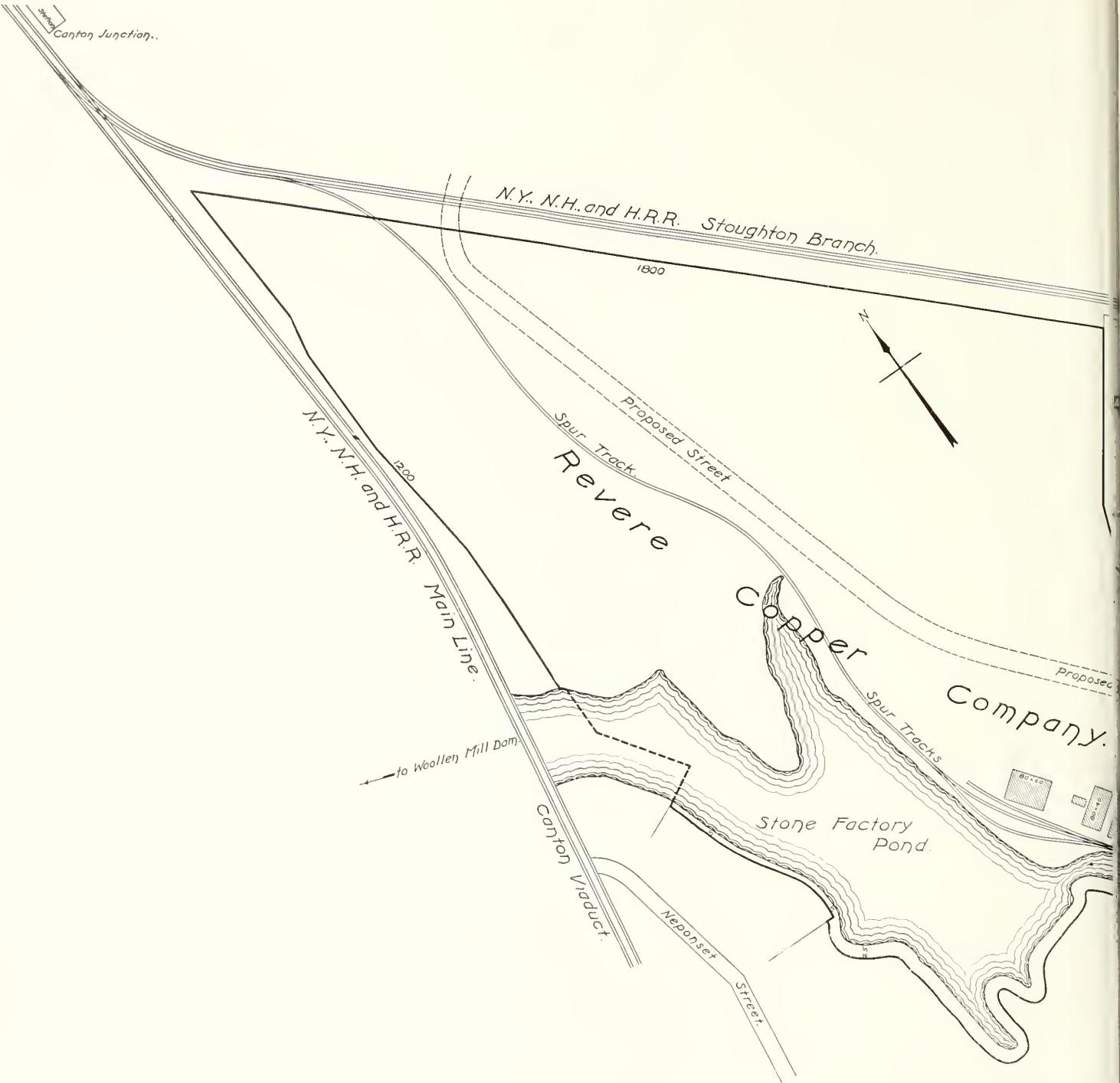


Above: View of Rolling Mill. Collection of author. Below: The Kinsley Iron and Machine Company kept eight oxen to handle rail cars on their mill spur and plant tracks. The foundation for their ox barn is still visible at 56 Ames Avenue. Photo date 1971. Photo by author.



Rolling Mill Yard at Kinsley Iron and Machine Company. Trestle was for the unloading of coal. Bridge in right of photo passes over river which runs underneath the Rolling Mill in background. This mill used oxen to switch its cars; imagine the effort needed to haul cars of coal up onto the trestle. Photo date 1908. Collection of author.





CLOSING OF THE KINSLEY IRON AND MACHINE COMPANY

In July of 1907, the Town's damaged economy suffered yet again as the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company announced its intention to close before the year's end. At the time of the announcement, 225 men were employed at the K.I.M. Company. Again, the official obituary appeared in the real estate brochure of 1909.

KINSLEY IRON & MACHINE CO. Established 1787

The present site of the Kinsley Iron and Machine Co. was the location of the first saw mill in Canton. In 1703 it was known as "Deacon Joseph Tucker's Saw Mill." In 1760 it became the site of "Quaker" Leonard's forge. In 1787 Leonard and Kinsley, workers in iron, erected here a plant for the purpose of manufacturing "useful implements from iron" and his was

the start of the present business. In the decade 1790-1800, they turned out annually over 200 millsaws and 300 dozen scythes; cut and rolled 1000 tons of iron between 1793-97; began the welding of steel in 1792 and the manufacture of steel in 1797. In 1809 they put in operation a steel furnace and commenced the manufacture of guns, the Government being a very large purchaser preceding and during the War of 1812. A little later the pro-



duct of the shops was sleigh shoes, plow shares, crow bars and wagon axles. In 1821 the firm was discontinued, one member taking the property on the east side and the other on the west side of Washington Street. In 1835 the Foundry plant was completed for the manufacture of castings. In 1840 the entire property came into the possession of the two sons of Adam Kinsley, and the business increased rapidly from month to

month and became more profitable year by year. With the coming of the railroads, the manufacture of car wheels and axles added largely to the business. In 1852 the Rolling Mill was erected and equipped. In 1854 the present Corporation was chartered, and Oliver Ames of Easton became its president in 1859. In 1875 the plant was destroyed by fire, but immediately reconstructed as a more modern and up to date plant. To show the

manner in which the business grew, in 1845 the manufactured material aggregated 350 tons annually, in 1876 it had increased to 4000 tons annually and from this time on it made wonderful strides of progress as well as increase in size of plant and equipment, (making lots 2,3,4,5,6,7, and 8 in this sale). In 1907 its principal manufacture was "Kinsley" merchant bar iron and wagon axles; crow bars, railroad splices and spikes;

"Kinsley" blacksmiths' machinery; bolts and washers; general foundry work, forgings, truss rods, bolt ends and general machine shop work. At this time it was said to be the oldest manufacturing plant in continuous operation in the country. It is to be liquidated today for the simple reason that the owners have much larger interests that demand their entire attention. It should not be forgotten in the consideration of this location and property that its history is one of uninterrupted success for 120 years. Its history is almost as old and just as clean as that of the Government. At one time it was the largest maker of car wheels and axles in the country. At another time, the largest manufacturer of wagon axles. It has seen all of its competitors start and many of them go out of existence.¹⁰

The existence of this ancient foundry into the twentieth century is in itself remarkable. The distance from its raw materials and markets prompted the Ames family's decision to retire this truly historic facility.

It is unfortunate that when Canton's industrial past is discussed the primary focus is almost always the Revere Copper Company. The K.I.M. deserves equal respect and warrants further research and study.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Comment must be made on the general working conditions that existed at the K.I.M. Company and the Revere Copper Company. With the exception of the fatal illness involving several men at the K.I.M. during the summer of 1888, very little of the hazards of industrial employment were ever mentioned in the local press or recorded in any manner. The fact was, of course, that the K.I.M. in particular was an incredibly harsh place to work.

The iron works, with its blistering heat beat against the bodies of the half naked workers, wore out or crippled many men before their time. The inexorable laws of manufacture demanded youth or vigor in exchange for the gold for which the employees slaved from sunrise to sunset. In the summer, the furnace heats would be started at three o'clock in the morning in order that the operators might quit early in the afternoon and secure some respite from the scorching heat of July and August. Men grew old quickly, too quickly. New men must take their place.

The Revere Copper Company was the salvation of many a family. Old men predominated. Men of seventy and seventy-five years

were common. The hard labor was done by the younger generation, and the popularity of the Revere family was unbounded because they amalgamated the interest of the community with their own, furnishing houses to their employees at rentals that barely sufficed to cover expenses, paying employees a good wage, and asking a fair day's work in return.¹¹

Thus comes to light almost ten years after the last fire was extinguished at the K.I.M. the severe hardships endured by the men who worked at the Iron Works. While the hazards encountered by the workmen were well known, they were not subject to public discussion in the passive *Canton Journal*. While the life shortening and injury prone operation of the K.I.M. was a fact of life, the Town of Canton had luck on its side in having an unusually fortunate transfer of skills and labor with the Revere Copper Company.¹²

1909 saw several major changes occur. The ever troubled Blue Hill Street Railway's car barn burned at Canton Junction in February of 1909. On a brighter note, the properties formerly occupied by the Revere Copper Company and the Kinsley Iron and Machine Company were auctioned off in May of 1909. The Plymouth Rubber Company of Stoughton bought the majority of the property. The depressed sale price

reflects the situation that existed. The entire real estate of the Revere Copper Company sold for \$13,000. The K.I.M. property west of Washington Street and including the land under Forge Pond went for \$10,000. The remainder of the K.I.M. property was bought in smaller parts.

It was with a note of hope that the townspeople viewed the property transfer of their two major heavy industries to new ownership. The opportunity for employment and the resulting payrolls would provide a much needed tonic for the Town's overall economy.

¹Revere Copper Company and Kinsley Iron & Machine Company, J.E. Conant & Co., Lowell, MA 1909.

²Canton Journal, January 10, 1902.

³Canton Journal, January 17, 1902.

⁴Canton Journal, March 21, 1902.

⁵Canton Journal, May 23, 1902.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Canton Journal, December 12, 1902.

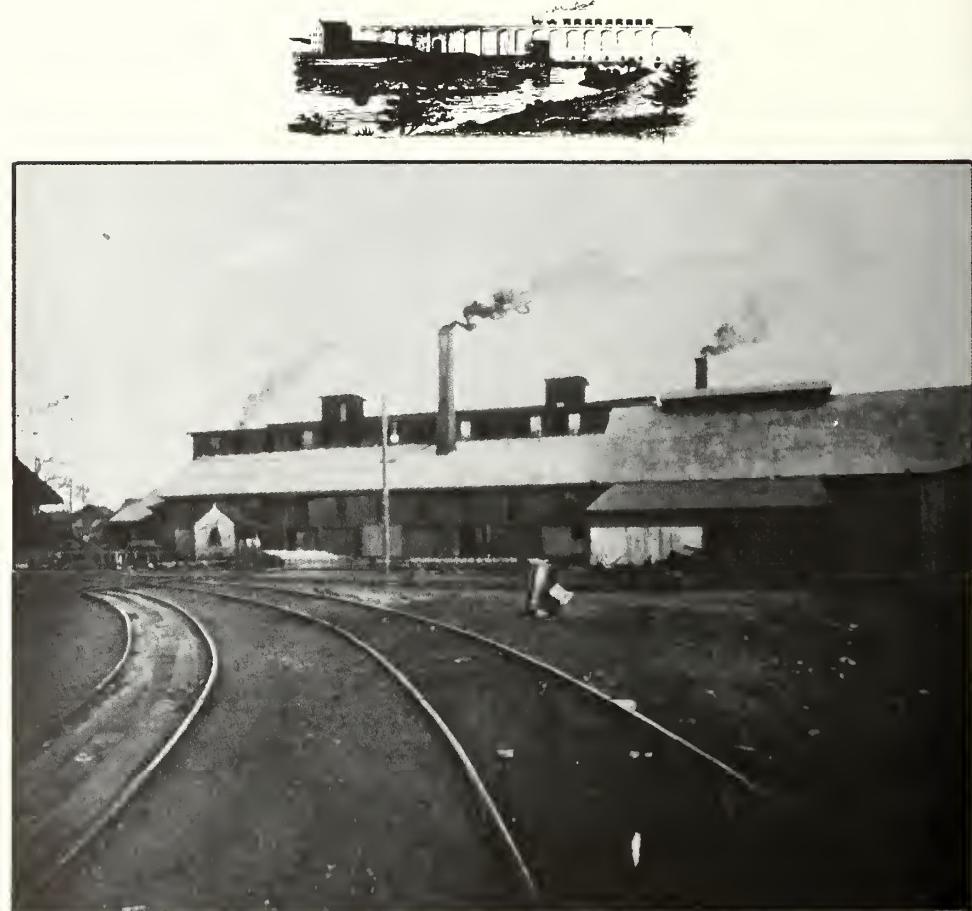
⁸Canton Journal, January 2, 1903.

⁹Canton Journal, June 19, 1903.

¹⁰Revere Copper Company and Kinsley Iron & Machine Company, J.E. Conant & Co., Lowell, MA 1909.

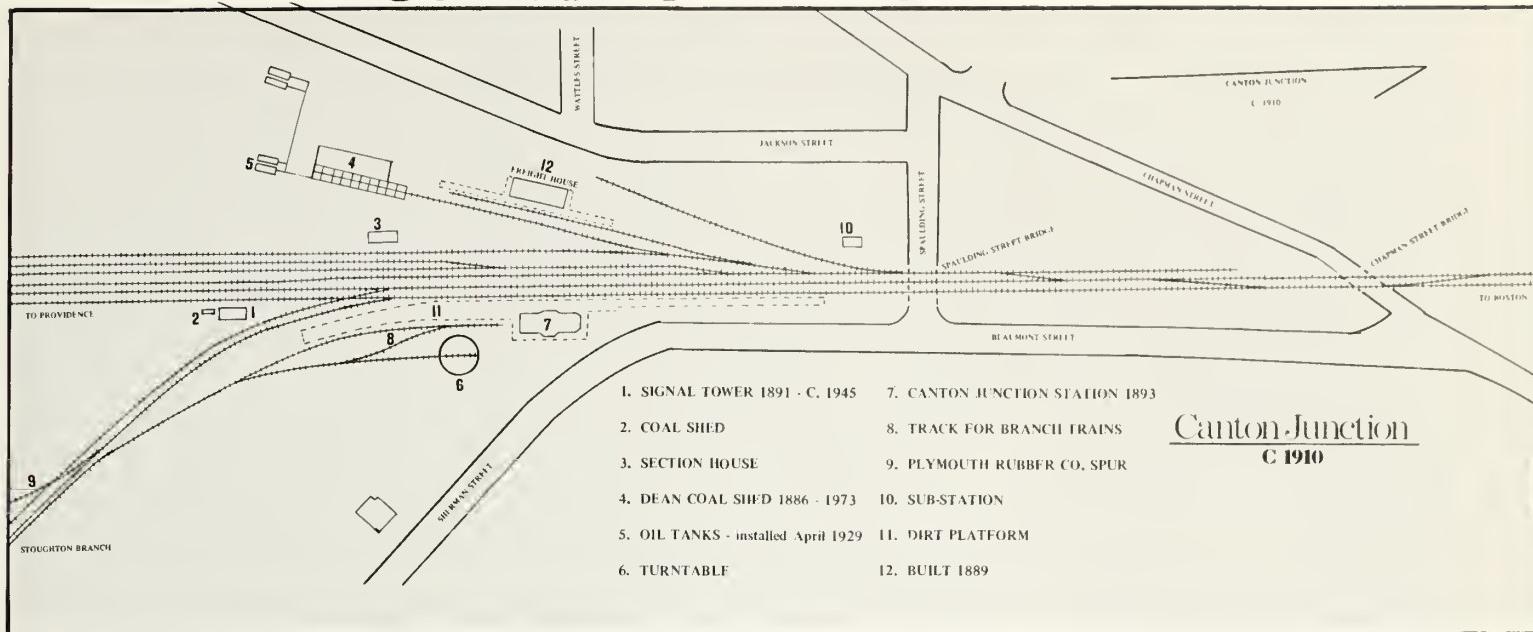
¹¹Canton Journal, December 22, 1916.

¹²The writer is particularly sensitive to this situation as his own maternal great-grandfather, Patrick Grimes, was employed at the Revere Copper Works from 1847 until 1900.



View of Rolling Mill. Collection of author.

Canton Junction



Chapter Seven

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1910-1919

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- 1911 Plymouth Rubber in full operation on site of former Revere Copper Works.
 - 1917 Viaduct guarded against sabotage.
 - 1918 Canton out of coal — men cutting wood — February
 - 1919 Blue Hill Street Railway goes into receivership — April
Mary Miles Minter, silent screen star, shoots a scene for "Anne of Green Gables" at Springdale Station.

Rare view of Canton Junction looking toward Boston. The clerk checking the yard does not take notice of the Blue Hill Street Railway car headed for Norwood. The car appears to be a "10 bench open" built by Wason in 1909. Photo date: circa 1910. Collection of Mr. & Mrs. William Russell.





Interior photograph of Canton Viaduct. Railroad Engineer, George T. Sampson (right) inspects structure. Note formation of stalactites. Photo date: October 1912. Collection of Canton Historical Society.

The years between 1910 and 1920 were to be those of realistic consolidation for relief of Canton's industrial plight. By May of 1910 the buildings to the west of Washington Street belonging to the K.I.M. were all but torn down. The Plymouth Rubber Company was building a new track during the summer to handle coal shipments. The next year would see Revere Street extended from the plant to connect with Sherman Street. The Plymouth Rubber Company completed its move out of Stoughton to Canton by late 1911 and created the need by May of 1912 for a new morning train. The train left Stoughton at 6:20 a.m., arriving in Canton at 6:30 a.m. It was patronized by some 300 Plymouth Rubber employees who lived in the Stoughton area.

The years 1910 to 1913 saw the New Haven's grandest plans for the expansion unfold for public view. The main line was to be increased to a four-track system from the existing two and electrified. Details of this massive project, the estimated costs of which fell to between \$6,500,000 and \$7,000,000, were discussed at length in several meetings the railroad officials held with the selectmen. Such expansion would call for bridges to be built over the Dedham and Green Lodge Street grade crossings. The Viaduct posed a problem, but it was planned to widen it on its west side and install a fifty foot wide underpass in place of the existing single narrow arch where Neponset Street passed

through. The grade at Canton Junction would be raised some seven feet, with the depot being raised to that height as well, although the street grade would not be disturbed. The Spaulding Street bridge would be removed and a new bridge placed 200 feet further north. An underground passageway would connect the north and southbound tracks.

As the grand plans proceeded, the New Haven Railroad's financial bubble burst and, instead of new construction by the summer of 1913, the townspeople found a major retrenchment taking place, with all the expansion plans cancelled and a curtailment of passenger service effective with the schedule that went into effect on September 27, 1913.

The Viaduct itself during this period was the scene of speculation, inspection, repair and death.

In 1910 the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad reinforced the arches on both sides of the structure with concrete.

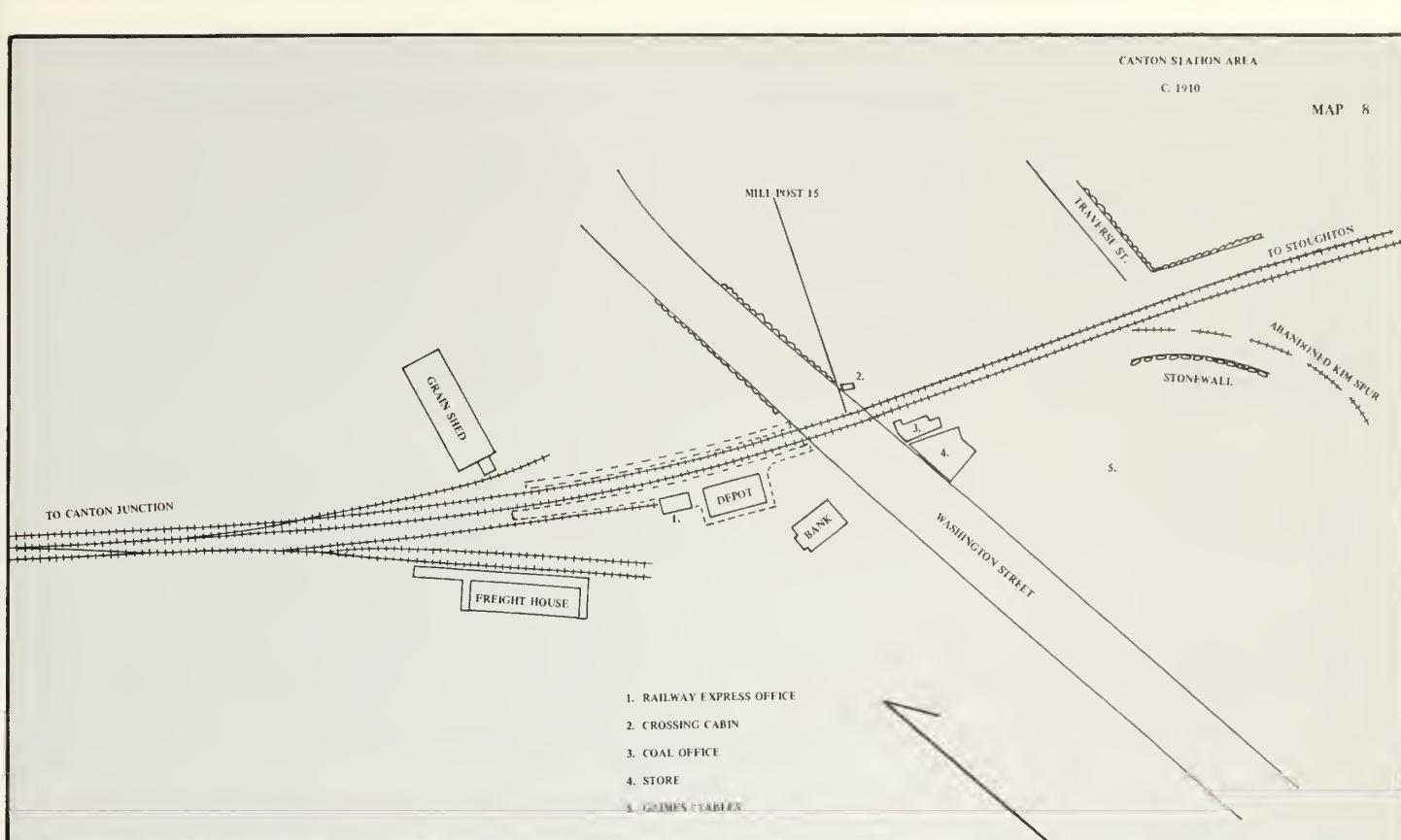
Late in October in the year 1912, Mr. George T. Sampson, one of the railroad engineers, had one of the large stones near the ground removed and invited me to accompany him on an examination of the interior of the viaduct. Previous to our arrival three platforms had been erected inside the structure which were connected by ladders. We crawled through the opening and, supplied with electric flashlights and a camera, we had no dif-

ficulties as we proceeded with the examination which proved satisfactory. There were no broken or cracked stones, and the joints were still full of good hard mortar, all of which I think speaks well for these oldtime engineers and masons, when you consider that this bridge had been built eighty years, and for one of the first railroads that was operated in this country, before they had a chance to learn by experience what would be the effect of the rapidly moving trains or the effect of the constantly increasing loads it has been called upon to carry. For you must remember that when this structure was built it was to carry a single track and a train with an engine weighing perhaps thirteen tons. That would appear today to be a toy locomotive and be but little larger than the old fashioned stage coach, while today the engine will weigh a hundred tons or more, and many of the loaded freight cars will weigh from seventy to one hundred tons.¹

The thorough inspection of the viaduct stemmed from a series of minor problems which began around 1909. In the December 24, 1909 issue of the *Canton Journal*, in an article entitled "More Trouble with the Viaduct at Canton Junction:"

Last Saturday morning, Mr. Wilbert H. Jerauld, section foreman for the New Haven road discovered a bad break in the top of one of the arches of the old stone Viaduct. It was the fourth arch to the east of Neponset Street and is shown in the picture on the heading of the Journal. A large block of granite had dropped out of place, and the arch was badly cracked and ready to fall. A flagman was stationed on the tracks to slow down all the trains. A work train arrived during the afternoon with heavy timbers that were lowered over the broken arch. Stone masons have been at work since Sunday morning repairing the damage. This is the second arch that has given way under constantly increasing load, and it is said that the whole bridge was condemned some time ago. It is probable that the old Viaduct that has been one of Canton's treasured landmarks since 1842 will have to be taken away and replaced with a bridge of modern steel construction in the near future.

The obituary for the viaduct was of course a bit premature. No evidence has ever come forth as to its being condemned, and the article's author manages to combine this use of rumor with the 1842 date error in the Viaduct's con-



struction. Less than five years later, in March of 1914, however, foreman Wilbert H. Jerauld, who spotted the break in the arch in 1909, was added to the long list of people who were killed or maimed on the Viaduct. The *Canton Journal* of February 27, 1914 reports:

Wilbert H. Jerauld, a section foreman was struck by an express train and instantly killed. He was working on the Viaduct and stepped

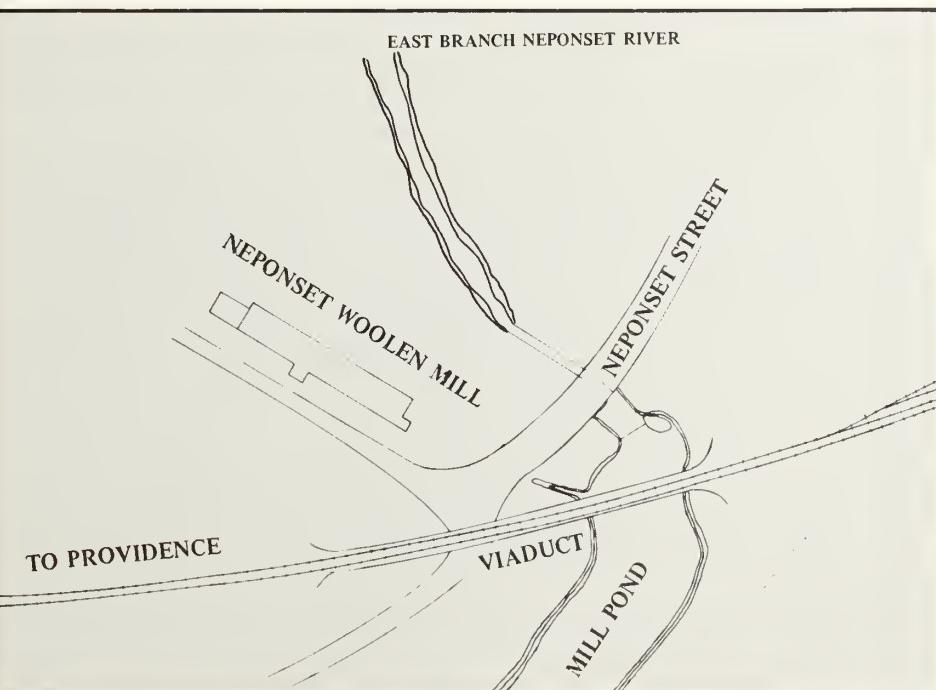
from the tracks on which an outbound train was approaching and got in the way of the express. The engine threw the foreman high in the air, and his body was hurled sixty feet to Neponset Street below. The accident happened within 100 yards of his home just opposite the Viaduct.

The structure's layout, in fact, made it quite dangerous to anyone using it as

a short cut. The Viaduct is on a slight curve that is banked as well, and anyone on the bridge looking towards the opposite end has difficulty determining on which track a train is approaching. Section Foreman Jerauld's death was a rarity, in that two trains converged on the Viaduct while he was on it.

Socially this decade had to be one of the most uproarious in the town's long history. Let us begin, however, with a calm, almost idyllic look at an example of recreation amongst the town's working people in the charming years just prior to World War I, provided in the following editorial:

The passing of the open car has made quite a difference in the travel for pleasure on many trolley lines throughout the state. Where in years gone by parties would take rides for miles after sunset on hot summer days in the open cars, the convertible car does not appeal to them as the one did where they could sit on the front seat with their hats off and feel the cool breezes. The "poor man's automobile" is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, and the enjoyable rides will soon be but forgotten memories. How we used to enjoy the bright moonlight rides through the various towns, sitting comfortably on the smokers' seats with a good cigar and pleasant companions. That day is gone for the poor man now, except on a few lines where



the spirit of economy has not been so fully developed as on the larger lines. The shop girl who is cooped up in some stuffy shop for the day now has the parks and beaches to go to for recreation, but nothing yet has been invented that will take children, all enjoying the exhilarating country air, making a change in the grind of the week and a time eagerly looked forward to by each member of the family. How the cars would be crowded on a pleasant Sunday in the summer time, with families going to the country for a brief outing. The lunch basket was an indispensable adjunct and how carefully it was looked after until the party reached some favored spot where the family could sit beneath the forest trees and enjoy the beautiful summer days. Now we can enter a pay-as-you-enter car, change to a box car where there is not the freedom that was one of the delights of the open car, and you feel as though you wished you had stayed at home. The open car has been the means of delight to many, and its passing is regretted by hosts of people.²

The open trolley car may have been ending its career, but the same summer of 1912 saw a young Canton man just beginning his. Olaf Hendrickson would leave from Canton Station to join the Boston Red Sox and help them with his bat to win the World Series of that year.

That same summer saw the Town's Chief of Police, who was hired to crack down on the liquor traffic, found guilty of drunkenness. Soon thereafter, his chief accuser and leading tormenter was arrested for criminal libel, producing now what can be viewed as a period piece of high comedy.

The Town was rapidly changing into the Twentieth Century. By 1915, the automobile had replaced the railroad as the cause of most accidental deaths.

In June of 1915, aviator Harry M. Jones passed Canton twice in his plane with a flying time of 40 minutes from Providence to Squantum. He did not, to the disappointment of local people, race the New Haven's Merchants Limited as had been planned.

Canton's industrial stabilization and growth as a suburb of Boston can be accounted for the increase in population from 4,797 in 1910 to 5,606 in 1915.

WORLD WAR I

As World War I began, a detachment of the 9th Regiment National Guard arrived in town to guard, via sentry duty, the Viaduct from sabotage. After being quartered for a week in April 1917 at Canton Junction Station, the men accepted the offer by the Town to relocate to the old Revere School made surplus



The section crew poses for unknown photographer at the section house in Sharon. Prior to the widespread mechanization, manpower supplied the energy needed to maintain the physical property. Photo date: circa 1910. Collection of Author.

by the construction of the new Revere School in 1914. Other wartime sights included drafted men marching from the Town Hall to Canton Station to board the train for Camp Devens.

The winter of 1917-18 was one of extreme hardship. In addition to influenza the town suffered two major fires. The familiar stables of Charles and Peter Grimes, located near Canton Station, burnt with loss of several horses in early December of 1917. The transition from horsedrawn cab to motor cab was made almost complete.

The coal situation was desperate. The Blue Hill Street Railway, which was still operating despite serious financial ills, had only a couple of days' supply at its power plant, which was located on the Stoughton branch just beyond the Forge Pond arch on the Stoughton side. By February 1918, Canton was out of coal, and men had taken to cutting wood.

The stumbling Blue Hill Street Railway went into receivership in April of 1919. The following month a "war relic" train of the government visited the Town. Several cars were loaded with heavy guns, trench mortars and flame throwers, along with various other equipment taken from the enemy. The public showed minimal interest. The townspeople were more concerned over the absence of good business sense exhibited by the government controlled railroad.

Govt. Helps Blue Hill St. Rwy. Offer to move car of coal one mile for \$60

Train crew then decided not to do the freight work.

Receiver Spaulding of the Blue Hill St. Rwy. was given a good working idea of the efficiency and cooperation that prevails under the present system of government control last Saturday, when he called on the railroad management to help him out of a predicament.

The street railway had a consignment of coal enroute from the coal fields. It reached Providence, R.I. some time ago but was held at that point, since the government decided to commandeer all needed shipments of coal. Saturday morning, a survey of the railway's coal pile made it evident that the supply would be exhausted about noon.

Hasty communications with the coal dealers brought forth the information that they had a car of soft coal at the Canton Junction that could be spared in an emergency. Receiver Spaulding telephoned the railroad authorities, asking that the car be moved from the Junction to the siding at the power station, a distance of one mile. The railroad authorities responded that the task was worth \$60. Price or no price, the coal was



A wonderfully detailed photograph of men lining the Viaduct's arches with concrete to further strengthen the structure to allow for the increased weight of trains and for its age. Cracks had been discovered the previous year which allowed a block of granite to fall from an arch. Photo date: circa 1910. Collection of Author.

The Canton Junction section crew with foreman, Wilbert H. Jerauld, on the right. It was Jerauld who discovered the cracks in the Viaduct in 1909. He was killed while working on the Viaduct in February 1914. Two trains converged on the Viaduct so fast that Jerauld could not escape. He was struck by an express train and thrown off the Viaduct to the street below. Photo date: circa 1910. Collection of Author.





Workmen repairing one of the small arches that allow the east branch of the Neponset River to pass through the Viaduct. Photo date: circa 1910. Collection of Canton Historical Society.

necessary, and they were told to bring up the car at once.

It then developed that the passenger crew would have to be pressed into service, as the freight crew would not begin active duty until the evening. The passenger crew decided that handling freight was out of their line and so passed the word back to the authorities.

The only recourse was to go back to the days of wooden nutmegs, and Receiver Spaulding pressed a number of wagons into service and hauled the coal via Canton highways with bonafide horsepower. It took all afternoon to accomplish the task, and when the work was accomplished it was found that the street railway had actually saved money on the deal. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good!³

A MOVIE SCENE AT SPRINGDALE

In what must have been a welcome change, Canton became for a brief time the scene of a movie making venture. In August of 1919, Mary Miles Minter came to town to shoot a scene at the Springdale Station.

Mary Miles Minter — Popular Screen Star Visits Canton Films Movie at Springdale

Little Mary Miles Minter, popular screen star and leading lady in "Anne of Green Gables," a new million-dollar film play which is now being produced by a Boston film company at Dedham, was in

town Tuesday morning filming a scene in this remarkable play.

Little Mary, as her many admirers call her, has been in Dedham for the past few weeks working on this play, which is being laid around the Old Fairbank homestead, a much-gabled structure in that town, on whose grounds most of the scenes have been photographed.

For the past few days, Miss Minter, with her director and cameraman, has been scouring the adjacent towns and rural districts for a suitable location for a rural railroad station scene and, passing through Springdale, they found the ideal one they had been searching for. Tuesday morning, Miss Minter, with a few of the supporting cast, arrived in town and, after the cameras had been set up, Miss Minter came back to the local station where she boarded the train for Stoughton. Arriving at Springdale, she stepped off, and the scene was taken, much to the enjoyment of the passengers and those who were lucky enough to see this little screen star perform.⁴

A few months later the local theater, known as the Orpheum, contracted for the film.

Mary Miles Minter at the Orpheum

Much interest is being evidenced in the announcement by manager P.T. Trueman of the Canton Orpheum⁵ that he has been successful in securing the rights to Realart's Production of "Anne of Green Gables," featuring Mary Miles

Minter. Manager Trueman found that in order to secure this picture it was necessary to contract at a high figure for the entire output of the Realart Corp., securing in addition to Miss Minter, Alice Brady and Constance Binney. It will be necessary to make a slight increase in the admissions on these productions, but he believes that the extremely high quality of Realart Productions will more than offset the few cents per ticket.⁵

Over the years, confusion developed as to what movie or famous silent screen actress starred in a movie made in part at Springdale Station. Several local people, including members of the Canton Historical Society, would state that the "movie made at Springdale was 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.'" The error was compounded and strengthened by an article in the July 5, 1940 edition of the *Canton Journal*, which reported the razing of the Springdale Station. At the time, the *Canton Journal* reported that the movie scene shot at Springdale was for "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," starring Mary Miles Minter.

"Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" was, in fact, a famous movie starring Mary Pickford. It appeared at the Canton Orpheum in October of 1917.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Canton Viaduct, Robert Rogers (unpublished — Canton Historical Society).

²*Canton Journal*, June 7, 1912.

³*Canton Journal*, November 28, 1919.

⁴*Canton Journal*, August 15, 1919.

⁵*Canton Journal*, December 12, 1919.



Looking "west" toward Providence from the Spaulding Street bridge. The yard is at its peak with its maximum number of tracks in place. Two little-discussed structures are visible in this photo. The first is the maintenance building to the left of the station, and the second is the Deane's coal shed to the right side of the yard. Photo date: 1928. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

Chapter Eight

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS — 1920's

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- | | |
|------|---|
| 1920 | Great Snowstorms of February 1920
Blue Hill Street Railway ceases operation February 6 |
| 1922 | Old KIM Foundry burns — used as a grain shed — October |
| 1926 | New Haven bus service begins — January |
| 1927 | Major derailment at Chapman Street Bridge — February |

The nineteen twenties were ushered in with a massive snowstorm that began on Thursday, February 5, 1920. Almost two days of heavy, blowing snow was followed by a driving rain that was then subjected to quick freezing action. The effect upon the town was illustrated in a bulletin-like article appearing as a lead to a detailed story on the storm that appeared in the February 13, 1920 edition of the *Canton Journal*.

Two Trains Stalled from Thursday Night Until Saturday Morning. One Hundred and Fifty Passengers Dependent on Red Cross and Citizens for Food and Shelter. Bread Supply Exhausted within an Hour of Each Baking, and No Yeast Cakes for

Home Product. Blue Hill Street Railway Out of Coal in Midst of Storm and May Have to Wait Until Line is Opened Up by Thaw. Burials Impossible and Funerals Postponed. Snowplows Unable to Navigate Sidewalks and Take to Street. Pedestrians and Horses Have Only One Avenue of Traffic. First Train on Branch Since Thursday Came in Monday Morning Feb. 9th. Stoughton Postal Authorities Send Pungs to Canton Junction to Receive and Deliver Mail. Pung Service Between Canton and Stoughton. Doctors Tramp Afoot for Two Days Attending Pneumonia, Grippe and Influenza Patients. Alarming Prevalence of Lung Diseases.¹

The Storm was to be remembered best as the killer of the Blue Hill Street Railway, as the cars never ran again following that howling February 6th, 1920.

Two trains had stalled on the branch, the first being the 5:37 p.m. from Boston, which slowly came to a halt alongside the Blue Hill Street Railways Power Station. The second train became stalled at Canton Station that same Thursday afternoon. The difficulties were compounded by the fact that three cars at Canton Station had derailed and were to do so once again before the week was over. The passengers of the trains were bound for Taunton, New Bedford and Newport, and numbered close to two hundred. The trains' conductors, realizing that the



Above: Once a station on the Blue Hill Street Railway at the foot of Blue Hill, this little building was moved to its location across from Canton Junction in the 1920's and has been used for a variety of businesses since. Photo date: 1975. Photo by Author. Middle: The Station Master's house, Canton Junction. Rented in recent years to private families, it was torn down in the late 1970's by its MBTA owners. Photo date: 1976. Photo by Author. Below: You didn't have to wait for a train to travel from Canton Junction to North Easton. A New England Transportation Company bus passes midway in its run at Stoughton's distinctive depot. The bus is a 1926 Mack model "AB" in the NET 100 series. Photo date: February 22, 1928. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

trains were not going to get through, advised their famished passengers to go to the local stores and lunchrooms. These businesses became swamped with people and remained open during the night.

With the continuation of the storm on Friday, the railroad authorities notified the local Red Cross of their dilemma, and the Town Hall was made available. Fifteen women passengers were put up in private homes. Over a hundred and fifty people were housed at the Town Hall that Friday, and — as luck would have it — there appeared two remarkable men. The first was an army cook who possessed both incredible physical endurance as well as the knowledge of food preparation for a large number of people. Soon the Town Hall kitchen, which was located in the basement, was teeming with activity. The second was a black man who played the piano upstairs for hours, providing entertainment and diversion from the ever present card games.

Trainmen had days of exhausting work under miserable conditions. The snow had deposited drifts in the Pleasant Street area of over 10 feet, and this measure was taken following Friday's heavy rain, which had a compacting effect.

The mainline was opened around 3:00 p.m., after being closed for almost an entire day. By mid-morning Saturday, the snowbound travelers at the Town Hall were notified that a train was available at Canton Junction to take them home via the main line and the Taunton Branch.

The storm caused a massive tangle in the area of freight shipments. The side-tracks began to fill up at the Junction because of the inability of the railroad to clear the industrial sidings. A second ice storm on February 15 compounded the railroad's difficulty. Passenger schedules were not being adhered to, and this was the situation for over a month following the first storm. The freight traffic was completely forgotten.

The public became increasingly annoyed with the poor service provided in this post-war period. Editorials lectured on how the railroad should be run; the letter to the editor column was alive with support for such statements and always mentioned yet another anecdote to support the overwhelming fact that the railroad — and, in particular, passenger service — was in a steep decline.

HIGHWAY TRAVEL

The growing number of automobiles led to problems of different dimensions for the railroad. Crossings became, again, the most dangerous part of town. The crossing gates were lowered, on occasion trapping a motorist between the gates, leaving no option other than driving through to safety.

The demise of the street railway system left a gap in the light-density routes — routes that could not economically





The New England Transportation Company began operating January 18, 1926. A New Haven Railroad owned operation, its buses served areas such as the Stoughton Branch, bringing passengers to a main line station such as Canton Junction. Photo date: circa 1928. Collection of J.R. Snopek.

justify the operation of a conventional train. The New Haven responded with bus service between Canton Junction and North Easton. No attempt was made to conceal the fact that, should this service prove acceptable, the Springdale Station (which was already being bypassed by most of the trains on the branch) would be closed as well as the West Stoughton Station.

The bus service, owned and operated by the New Haven Railroad, was known as the New England Transportation Company. Operation began on January 18, 1926, and a schedule of its operation may be found in the January 15, 1926 edition of the *Canton Journal*.

An early example of editorial dissatisfaction that has been retold a thousand different times...

The New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad tells us that it is carrying us to Boston and home again at a loss. That seems to be the story we heard when the increase to the present rates was allowed by the Commission a few years ago. When that increase became effective, the railroad was transporting us on a supposedly paying basis. Now we hear the same sad tale. In fact, it so affects our conscience to feel that we are getting more than we pay for that we are moved at different times to give the conductor an extra dime to make up the difference.

Local people are wondering, however, just when the New Haven road will ever have sufficient funds in its coffers to improve some rather distressing conditions in its property here. Both Canton and Canton Junction stations are so obsolete that the



The Stoughton Branch saw very early use of early gas electric equipment. Here, a Sykes car #9018 is shown leaving the turntable at Canton Junction. This car was built for Sykes by Brill and could seat 59 passengers. Powered by Sterling 175 hp engines, they rode on two 4-wheel trucks with mechanical drive. Photo date: September 24, 1925. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Carlton Parker would have had to climb the signal tower at the west end of Canton Junction yard to obtain this photo of Train #10, THE BAY STATE, which left New York at 9:00 a.m. with a club car, parlor cars, dining car and coaches, due at South Station at 2:30 p.m. This photo also gives a good indication of the amount of fill necessary to build up the approaches to the Viaduct itself. Photo date: April 10, 1926. Photo by Carlton Parker, Courtesy of Paul B. Carroll.

people are now convinced that the road should institute steps to improve the buildings so that they might have some features of modernity.

Heated? By the same method as was in vogue 25 years ago, poorly ventilated and lighted and with paint peeling from the walls — probably the original coat of paint — the stations, rather than being an improvement to the town, are, in their present states, an injury to it.

The toilet facilities are at their worst. The unsanitary conditions which practically prevail at all times, the dirt that accumulates, the filthy writings that abound on the walls and which are never removed, are quite starting to the civic pride and should be corrected by the railroad.

The station agents and others who are employed there are not respon-



A postcard view of Viaduct when elm trees lined Canton's streets. Photo date: circa 1925. Photo courtesy of William Powers.



sible for this sorry state of affairs, but rather the poor system in use by the railroad.

Suppose a pane of glass in a station window becomes broken, as is often the case. Instead of employing a competent local workman to install

a new glass, the railroad, in time, sends a man to Boston with the dimensions of the new glass required, and he returns in a day or two with the glass. Here we have a modern system worked out to its highest degree. Canton has waited a long

time for these station improvements. It is high time that they become a reality, especially when the public pays the bill.²

A solution to the crossing situation was sought by the railroad in its request in May of 1925 to replace the crossing

Above: An idyllic scene with a youngster much more concerned with his fishing on a hot July afternoon than with the train from Providence. Photo date: July 17, 1926. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Below: Atlantic #1100 built in 1907 for high speed limiteds were now relegated to Boston and Providence service. Photo date: July 28, 1928. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



gates at Dedham Road with the new type of flashing red lights. The railroad also planned to remove the signal tower at Dedham Street as well. Despite the vigorous protests of the selectmen, the railroad was allowed to install such flashing lights at Dedham Street in the summer of 1926. The death of a well known local woman in 1930 at the crossing incensed the town, yet it was another seven years before the DeMatteo Construction Company built the concrete overpass that was to carry Dedham Road over the mainline tracks of the N.Y.N.H.&H. RR.

FIRE THREAT

Fire continued to be a major cause of concern, both to the railroad and to the town. Within a week in June of 1921, both the High Street Bridge and the Chapman Street Bridge were burnt by the sparks being thrown from a passing locomotive to the dry timbers of the bridges.

The largest fire since the Catholic Club (John Fhatley House) burned in January of 1918, occurred not more than a hundred yards away, when one of the few remaining buildings of the Kinsley Iron & Machine Company burned. The former foundry, which dated back to 1856, had been used since 1915 as a grain shed by the current owners — Bryan & Raynolds Co.

MAJOR DERAILMENT

A major derailment occurred February 9, 1927, in what has become over the years a favorite spot for freight derailments — the area beneath the Chapman Street Bridge. The account is both vivid and succinct, and is presented here in full.

Big Freight Wreck Ties Up All Traffic

Canton Journal, Feb. 11, 1927

Express Train Flagged Just in Time, Wrecking Crews Work More Than Day Pulling Wreckage From Tracks at Canton Junction

Owing to the wreckage of a freight train shortly after noon last Wednesday, Canton commuters had a hard time reaching home that evening, and, in fact, all day yesterday, as service was not resumed until this morning.

A long freight train enroute for Boston, heavily loaded, was badly wrecked just north of the Canton Junction Station, when one of the middle cars left the rail, and the whole train buckled, throwing the remainder of the cars in all directions and piling up twenty-two of the cars in a hopeless tangle, completely filling the narrow gorge at this point.

With a twenty-foot high ledge of solid rock on one side and an equal height of sand bank on the other on a two-track road bed, the wrecked cars laid criss-cross across the tracks in such a way as not to leave space enough for a man to walk, and the Knickerbocker Limited, New York bound passenger train due in one minute, gave every indication of a great fatality which had seemed impossible to avert.

Readville was at once notified, but too late, as the Knickerbocker had passed that station; all signals were set, and the fireman of the wrecked freight, seizing a flag, hot-footed up the track. The Knickerbocker was brought to a stop in time to save the train, either by the signals or by the watchfulness of (the) engineer, and many lives were saved, as the train was loaded with passengers.

The accident took place at 1:22 p.m., and the Knickerbocker was due at the Canton Junction signal tower at 1:23 p.m., so it will be seen just how narrow the escape was.

News of the wreck was quickly flashed all over town and to other towns as well, and autos and pedestrians from all directions were soon on the scene. Canton police and railroad police were on hand to pre-

Atlantic #1100 was the first of twelve built in 1907. Its drivers were 79," and the locomotive had 25,725 lbs. of tractive effort. Photo date: July 28, 1928. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection Norton D. Clark.





Above: The trackman on his velocipede pauses alongside Canton Tower as a Providence bound local pulls past. Photo date: April 11, 1925. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Below: The Bay State #10 gliding past Canton Junction with heavy Pacific 1396. It left New York at 9:00 a.m. and arrived in Boston at 2:30 p.m. Photo date: June 15, 1929. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

serve order and direct traffic. It was a wonderful scene, twenty-two cars piled together in a hopeless mass, rails ripped up for at least one thousand feet; some of the wrecked cars were completely demolished, and it is estimated that there was more than one thousand tons of mixed freight in the derailed cars. Plumbing fixtures, sole leather, coal, molasses and oil tanks were mixed up together. Cars were piled across each other, on top of each other, and laid in all directions. The gorge just beneath the Chapman Street Bridge was filled nearly to the bridge, and, for many yards in either direction, the rails were torn up and cars derailed and strewn in one grand mix up.

The locomotive and the cars immediately in back of it were not affected, nor were the cars on the

rear end of the train, and the crew fortunately escaped injury.

Of course, when the first news of the accident had been received and such information learned as was possible, the thoughts of the Canton residents immediately turned to the Canton residents who are employed in Boston and to how they would be able to reach home after their day's work, as it could be seen at once that it would be impossible for any train to pass for at least twenty-four hours. Some notified their relatives by phone and made arrangements to meet them in Norwood. Others were forced to stay in Boston all night. The railroad, however, soon made arrangements to handle all local traffic for Canton, Sharon, Mansfield, Foxboro, and all other towns, as well as all through trains.

Trains were soon running from

Boston through South Braintree to North Easton and thence to Canton Junction, taking care of passengers on the Stoughton Branch. In this way, passengers were taken care of with but little delay, and all anxiety from that source was averted.

Wrecking cars from Readville on one end and from Waterbury, Conn. on the other, were soon at work and had a large audience to watch their operations. It was a wonderful sight to see the wreckers raise the huge cars with apparently little effort. Work was kept up all night, and, as soon as wreckage was cleared, tracks were laid — and, as soon as one track was laid, it was a comparatively easy matter to lift the other cars onto the rails and carry them out of the way. Yesterday afternoon one track was all cleared and laid, and at about nine o'clock last evening the first train passed through.

Considering the mass of wreckage in such a narrow and steep gully, it was remarkably quick work. Just about 23 years ago the tracks at this point were filled by a wrecked freight train, as will be well remembered by the residents who were living here at that time.

This morning regular train service was resumed, and the confusion of the last two days is all over.

The 1920's were years of frustration and change — people's memories were of excellent passenger service and accommodations. The days of Jacob Sillo-way had long since passed.

Canton Station Agent, James H. Weir had a long and productive career dating from 1876. He was assigned to Canton Station in 1896 and remained in the post, known to people as the "Dean of the Stoughton Branch," until his death at age 78.

¹Canton Journal, February 13, 1920.

²Canton Journal, October 26, 1923.

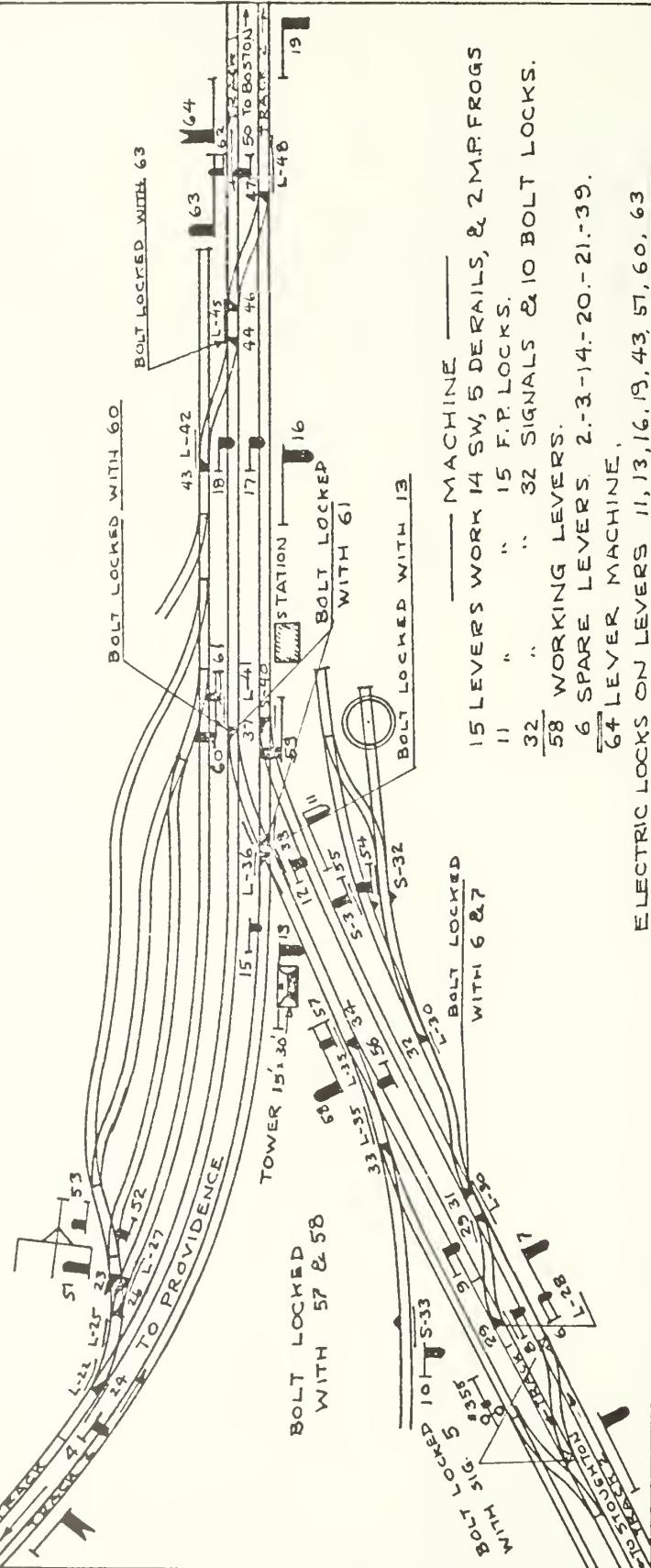


9-4-18

-LOCATION-
S&F MACH

LOCATION - 425' W. OF CANTON JCT. STATION.

CANTON JUNCTION, MASS.
INTG & BLOCK STATION NO 178.



TRACED BY A.A. LAWRENCE 7-26-77

FEB. 2, 1911

Diagram of Canton Junction interlocking and block station Mo. 178 February 2, 1911. Traced by A.A. Laurence. Collection of New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association.

Canton Junction



Chapter Nine

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS — 1930's

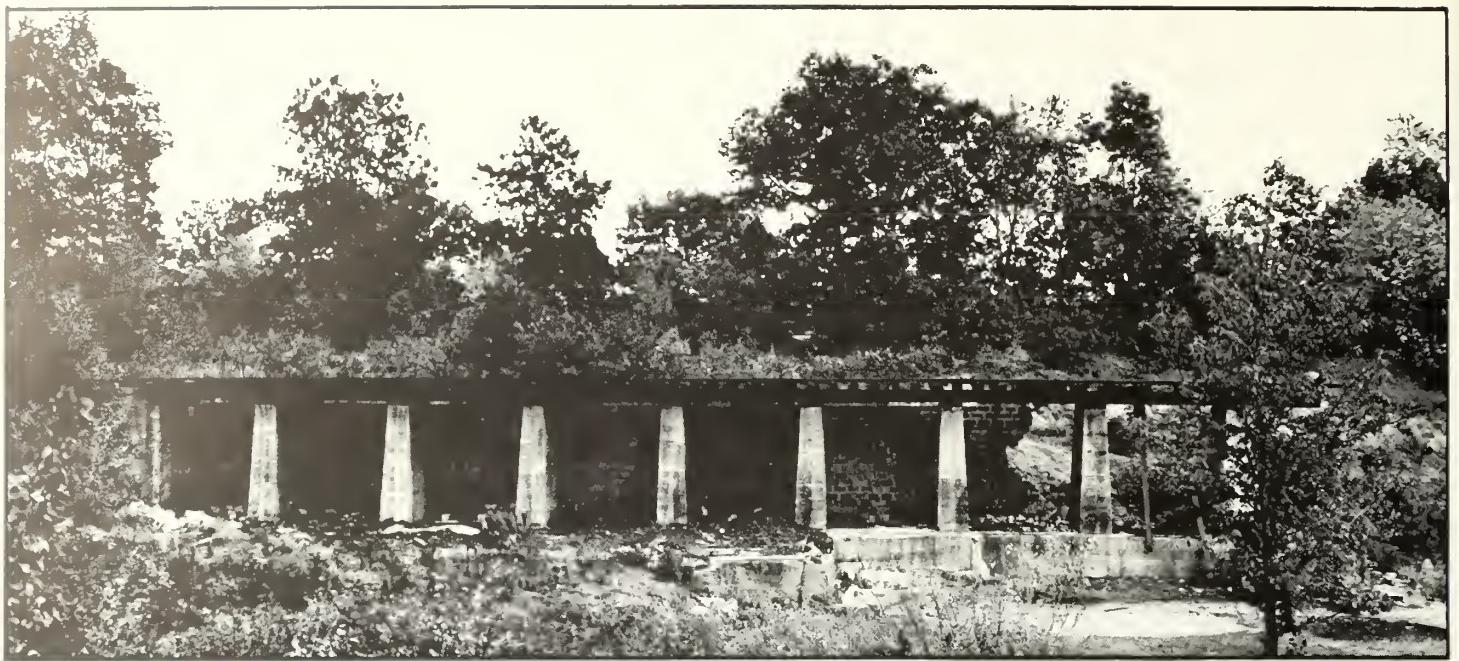
1930	James H. Weir — dead — Canton Station Agent for 34 years
1932	Russells Coal Spur constructed — May
1937	Dedham Street Bridge constructed Boat Train ceases to run after 90 years — 47 years of which it operated over the Stoughton Branch
1938	End of Passenger Service south of North Easton End of Sunday Passenger Service on Branch Most trains on Branch are a gas car shuttle between Canton Junction and North Easton

The 1930's brought forth many articles dealing with the history of the railroad in Canton. The surge in interest was due to the fact that the railroad's presence in the town was approaching a full century. One of the most detailed treatments was delivered in a talk to the Canton Historical Society on Monday, December 7, 1936, by Gregory W. Grover. The full text was printed in the December 11, 1936 edition of the *Canton Journal*.

RUSSELLS COAL SPUR

One of the few physical changes to take place along the railroad during this period was the building of Russells Coal Spur off the Stoughton Branch in May of 1932. Coal and coke were delivered there until 1966, when a car of coal spread the rails and the declining use ended. The spur was removed in 1971 along with the trestle and shed.

The railroads, at long last, were innovating and experimenting with new types of passenger equipment. The airflow train of the Burlington Railroad passed through town at 6:47 p.m. Wednesday, April 25, 1934, streamlined, diesel powered and capable of travelling at speeds of 100 M.P.H. There is little wonder that there was a good crowd on hand to view the train as it passed through Canton Junction — Canton unemployment had



Russells Coal unloading facility in 1971 when it was being dismantled. The spur trestle and shed were built in May of 1932, a short distance from Canton Junction on the Stoughton Branch. The spur had been unused since 1966. Photo date: 1971. Photo by Author.

reached 13.6% during the depression, and distractions were welcome.

A year later, on the afternoon of May 25, 1935, the New Haven had its own streamlined train on exhibit at Canton Station for over an hour. The "Comet" was to become a familiar sight in its long career with the New Haven.

CLOSING OF THE SPRINGDALE STATION

The depression had plunged the New Haven into bankruptcy by 1935, and it was during its reorganization that the first major curtailment of service on the Stoughton Branch was to take place.

The pattern of changing trains at Canton Junction was to be increased via the use of the gasoline powered rail-bus along the Branch. In addition, the Springdale Station days were numbered.

Sprindgale Railroad Station Among Those to be Closed

The section house, Canton Junction, built circa 1945 — the last surviving wooden railroad structure in Canton. Note freight house to right rear of section house. Photo date: September 1977. Photo by Author.



The stations at Springdale, Sharon Heights, and West Stoughton are among the stations of the New Haven Railroad ordered closed by Federal Judge Hincks who has directed the Old Colony Railroad to eliminate 88 stations in this state and five in Rhode Island.

He also ordered the trustees of the New Haven Railroad to put into effect its proposed new passenger timetable schedules in the territory east of Providence and Blackstone.

On the Stoughton Branch, the new timetable provides for 12 weekday trains from Boston to North Easton and 11 trains from North Easton to Boston, compared with 10 in each direction under the previous schedule. Passenger train service south of North Easton is discontinued. Principal train service changes in this territory include a new through train leaving Boston at 2:45 p.m. Daylight Saving Time, daily, except Sunday. On Saturday this train will replace the one which formerly left Canton Junction for North Easton at 3:05 p.m. These changes will be effective July 17. Extended hearings on these economies have been held before the Department of Public Utilities in Massachusetts, but no decision was reached. Residents of practically all the communities involved have reached their protest against curtailment of service. The public hearings on the matter were not expected to be closed by the commission until fall.

In reaching his decision, Judge Hincks recognized that the changes would cause inconvenience to some but assumed that transportation by highway would be available to those few who would be without service by rail. The stations ordered abandoned are little used.¹

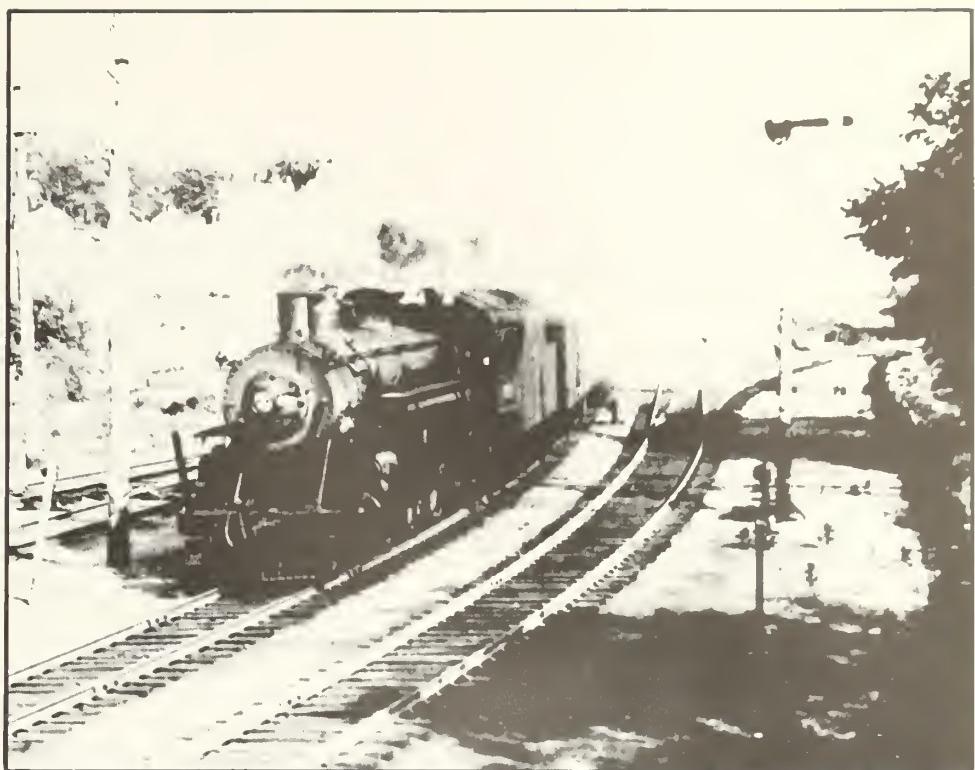
During the hearings it was noted that Springdale only handled an average of 11 passengers a day on and off from the four weekday trains that stopped at that station.

The Springdale Station and its 87 doomed sisters were given a brief reprieve in December of 1939 when, at the conclusion of the State's Public Utilities Commission hearings, it was ordered that they be reopened. One of the 88 stations, North Hanson, had already been torn down.

The Springdale Station's last flicker of life was short and on July 1 and 2 of 1940, the 49-year-old station was torn down.

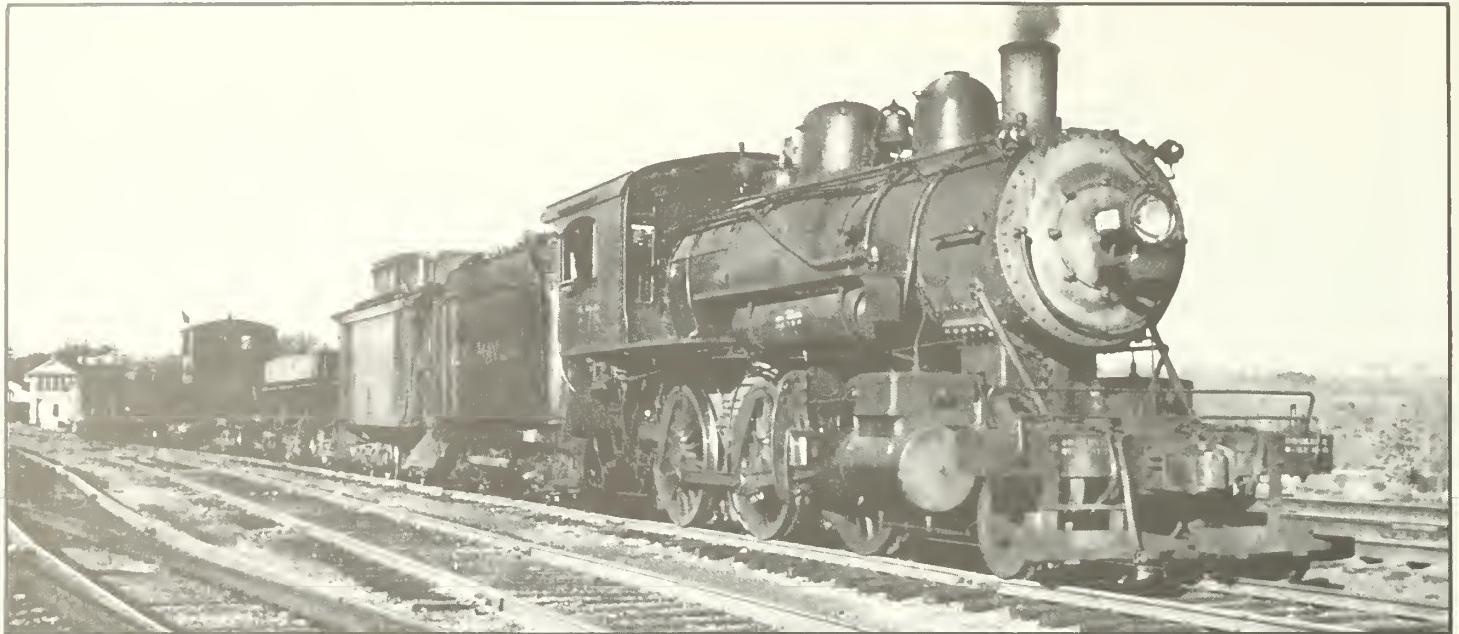
Springdale Station Being Razred by Railroad Employees

Employees of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad were engaged in tearing down the Springdale Station, Monday and Tuesday. This station was at one time used as



Above: Note the double-tracked branch. Photo date: June 17, 1931. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Below: Highway traffic was becoming heavy as the 1930's began, and a "blind" approach to the Viaduct's arch made it the scene of numerous accidents. The two cars are headed for Norwood. Photo date: circa 1930. Collection of Author.





Above: Work train just west of Canton Junction with dependable workhorse Mogul 276. Photo date: October 31, 1936. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Middle: Pacific #1370 heads a handsome New York-bound "Yankee Clipper" across the Viaduct in late March of 1930. Photo date: March 27, 1930. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Bottom: Pittsburgh Express behind Pacific 1372 left Boston at 3:30 in the afternoon and arrived in Pittsburgh at 7:45 the next morning. Photo date: July 21, 1935. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

a scene in the motion picture of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, in which Mary Miles Minter played the leading part. So passes another landmark.²

The newspaper had, of course, erred on the name of the film — it was *Anne of Green Gables*.

The railroad was moving fast in order to avoid having to reopen the station yet again.

THE BOAT TRAIN

The Springdale Station did outlive a much more famous associate in the form of the Fall River Boat Train. The Boat Train still used the Stoughton Branch as its route from Boston to Fall River. Canton people can still remember its roaring off the main line at the Junction and bearing down at the busy Washington Street Crossing at Canton Station. The crossing tender had to be more than alert as the express raced to Fall River.

Early in 1937 the Boat Train had celebrated its ninetieth birthday.

Ninety Years of Uninterrupted Service by Fall River Boat Train

On Wednesday, May 19th at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time), the Fall River Boat Train will leave the South Station, Boston, for Fall River Wharf. One hour and a half later, at 6:30 p.m., the passengers from the train will leave on the Fall River boat for New York City via the famous "Inland Water Route." Both of these trips will mark the 90th Anniversary



of the Fall River Line train and boat service from Boston to New York via Fall River.

The Fall River Boat Train is the oldest regularly scheduled train in the United States, and probably in the world, as the famous "Flying Scotsman" on the London & North-eastern Railway in England made its first trip on August 8th, 1850.

In 90 years of service, from 1847 to 1937, this train has had but ten permanent conductors. During these 90 years, the boat train and the Fall River line steamships have carried many of the nation's most notable men, including Presidents Grant, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, and others of lesser fame. President Franklin D. Roosevelt has been a

passenger many times, particularly in his younger days.

In the archives of the New Haven Railroad, owners of the Fall River line, is a treasured copy of an advertisement that appeared in the *Boston Advertiser* for Wednesday, May 19, 1847. The advertisement reads as follows:

**For New York via Fall River
and Newport**

The new Steamer Bay State, Captain J.J. Comstock, will leave Fall River THIS EVENING on the arrival of the cars from Boston. Train leaves the Depot of the Old Colony Railroad, corner of South and Kneeland Streets, Boston, at 5 o'clock, p.m. Berths and staterooms secured at 7 State Street and at Ticket Office of

the Old Colony Railroad, May 19.

Between the date this advertisement appeared and the 90th anniversary trip of the Fall River Line, stretches nearly a century of progress in transportation between Boston and New York. Faster trains now speed to Fall River wharf. More luxurious boats carry passengers through Long Island Sound, and the Fall River Line and the New Haven Railroad are looking forward to the next 90 years of service for travelers between these two important cities.³

The Fall River line was, of course, doomed. Instead of another ninety years of service, it had less than three months of operation left before it fell victim to the railroad's planned curtailment of money-losing operations.

Right: One of the Viaduct's six arches that allow the Neponset River to flow by the structure makes for a reflective study of the stonework. Photo date: 1937. Photo by Charles A. Brown. Below: Train #821, the Whaler, to New Bedford. A fast train between the two cities.

Boston	South Station	4:10 p.m.
Back Bay		4:15 p.m.
Canton Station		4:34 p.m.
Stoughton		4:41 p.m.
North Easton		4:48 p.m.
Taunton		5:05 p.m.
New Bedford		5:33 p.m.

Photo date: June 28, 1930. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



SUMMARY

The removal of the Springdale Station and the disappearance of the Boat Train signalled the beginning of a gradual decline that would see the removal of many railroad buildings and industrial sidings.

Yet another step taken almost without notice was the end of Sunday passenger service on the Branch. On weekdays, just three through trains were to be run to North Easton from Boston without changing trains at Canton Junction. All of this occurred in 1938.

The 1930's drew to a close with the economy slowly recovering. A bright spot was the increase in employment at the Readville Car Shops. The number of employees had grown from 717 in September of 1938 to over 1,200 men a year later. Years of neglected maintenance was being attended to, as events in Europe were moving rapidly and the demand for war materials was already being felt in the country. It would again be the railroad's burden to haul huge tonnage during the war years. In contrast to the first World War, the physical plant of the New Haven was improved to a point where the railroad was able to play an almost heroic role in the war effort. The employees of the road distinguished

themselves during this period and were to assure the industrial Northeast of a full wartime production with their dependable rail service.

¹Canton Journal, July 15, 1938.

²Canton Journal, July 5, 1940.

³Canton Journal, May 21, 1937.



Canton Junction

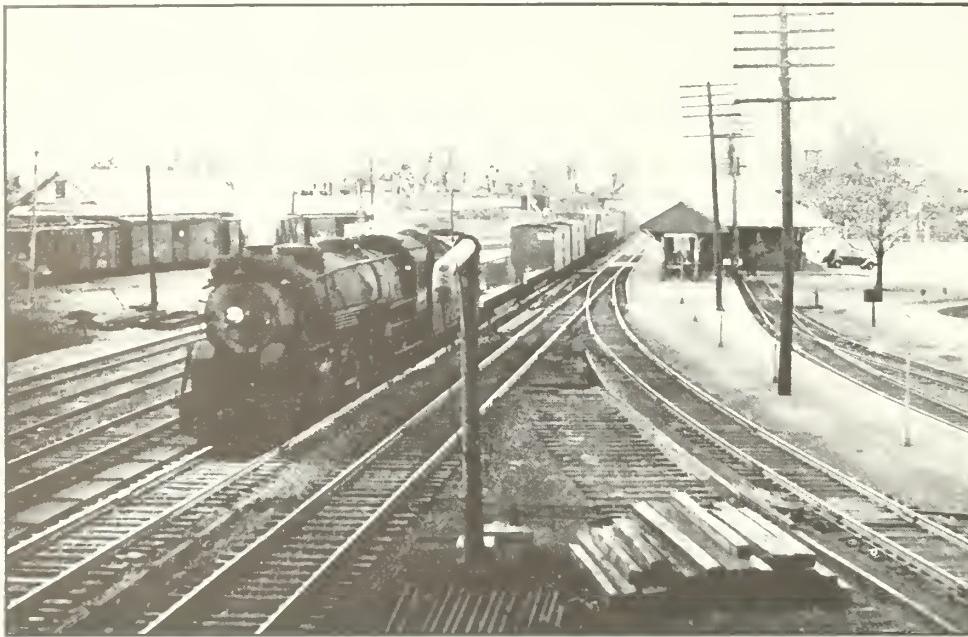


Winter view of local train at Canton Junction also includes details of switching rods in foreground and truck unloading at public team tracks.

Chapter Ten

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS — 1940's

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- | | |
|------|---|
| 1940 | Springdale Station torn down
Stoughton Branch reduced to a single mainline |
| 1947 | First attempt to end passenger service between Canton Junction and North Easton |
| 1948 | Removal of crossing gates at Washington Street Crossing — Installation of flashing lights and warning bell
Removal of signal tower at Canton Junction
Canton Station closed |
| 1949 | Turntable and spare track removed at Junction |



Top Left: Locomotive #3347, a mountain type built in the early 1920's for Main Line Freight Service steams west bound. Photo also provides us with date Stoughton branch being reduced to a single track. Switch has been removed and rail and ties are neatly stacked. Photo date: May 11, 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. **Below Left:** Looking up Stoughton Branch from signal tower later in summer in 1941. Note in background the three tracks soon to be reduced to two by removing track on left. Photo date: Summer 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. **Below:** Train #33 The Shore Line Express passing Canton Junction at 6:30 pm with Pacific #1372 built in 1916 heading for New York, as photographed from the Signal Tower door. Note the branch track has been relocated midway between the water spout and platform. Photo date: September 1, 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Right: Change at Canton Junction for local train to North Easton. I-4 Pacific #1365 with a Providence Local pauses to allow passengers to transfer to a Brill Gas Electric which will travel over the Stoughton Branch. Photo date: November 9, 1940. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Joseph P. Danahy. **Middle Right:** Looking "west" toward Providence from Canton Junction platform. Both Gas Electric 9108 and the signal tower will be memory in less than a year as this photo was taken in 1948, the last full year of shuttle trains on branch. The tower already has a desolute look and by late 1949 will disappear. Photo date: 1948. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



World War II placed severe demands upon every aspect of the country's resources. The railroad, sluggishly emerging from bankruptcy, now was faced with freight and passenger traffic the likes of which it hadn't seen in decades.

Miles of track scheduled for abandonment now became important routes. In spite of the obvious problems of obsolescence and deferred maintenance, the railroad rose to the occasion. Abandonment cases were soon forgotten.

HOSPITAL TRAIN ON THE STOUGHTON BRANCH

My own memory begins with seeing long hospital trains on the branch, headed toward Camp Miles Standish from the Port of Boston with young Americans wounded in France. These trains moved slowly and usually at night, for the obvious reason that the men inside were

badly hurt and it was felt that the effect upon the public — seeing such numbers of wounded men — would be demoralizing. The faces looked out at me from those cars; some men looked almost completely bandaged, many in traction, yet numerous soldiers managed to return my wave as they slowly pulled past our back porch, which was only fifty feet from the track. I recall my mother being in tears at the sight of the wounded, and — although I was still of preschool age — the impact of such moments was registered. Camp Miles Standish, located in Raynham, was a distribution point from which the men usually were sent on to hospitals in the south for further recuperation.

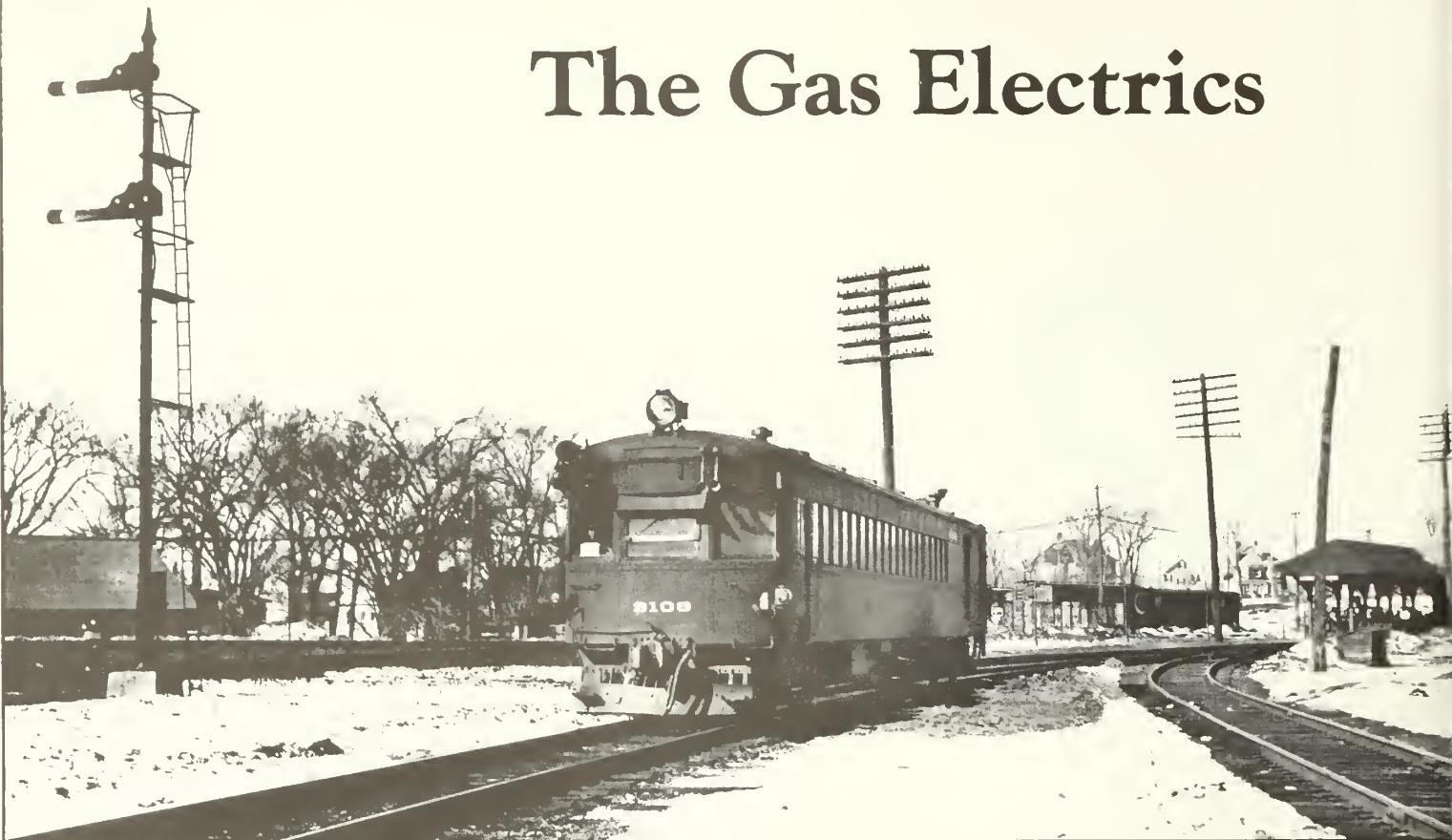
One unusual wartime activity on the branch was the transportation of German prisoners of war to work at the Springdale Finishing Company, whose



Right: World War II has just ended and this powerful R-3 mountain type locomotive helped win the war. The New Haven Railroad and its employees distinguished themselves by moving enormous wartime tonnage. From the front of the signal tower Smybol Freight BN-5 with locomotive #3556 is well into its struggle to climb to the Sharon summit. Photo date: September 3, 1945. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



The Gas Electrics



A Brill Car #9108 which was regularly used on the branch was built in 1927. In a short time through service was to replace the need to change trains and the gas-electrics were to be retired. Photo date: 1948. Photo by Kent Cochrane, Collection of T.J. McNamara. A local powered by DL-109 #703 stops at Canton Junction with the familiar Brill Gas Electric #9108 waiting for passengers for Stoughton Branch. Note the bus connection to the right of the Brill car. In a year's time this scene will disappear as the Gas Electric will have been withdrawn. Photo date: October 12, 1948. Collection of Norton D. Clark.

operation was booming with the Allied need for waterproof canvas. At the peak of production in 1944, Springdale Finishing was treating — each month — two million yards of material called "Fire Chief Fire Proofing Cloth" that was used for tents.

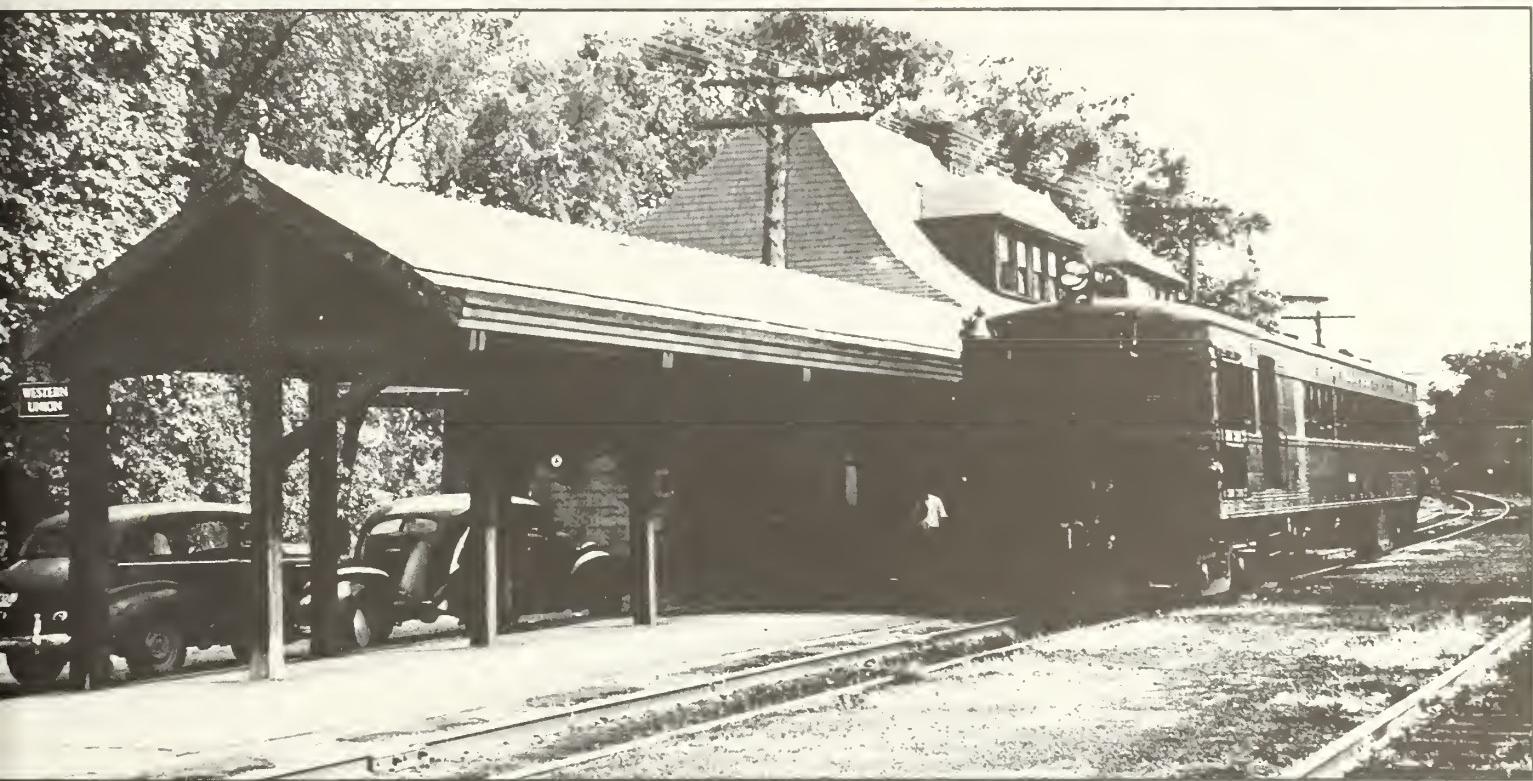
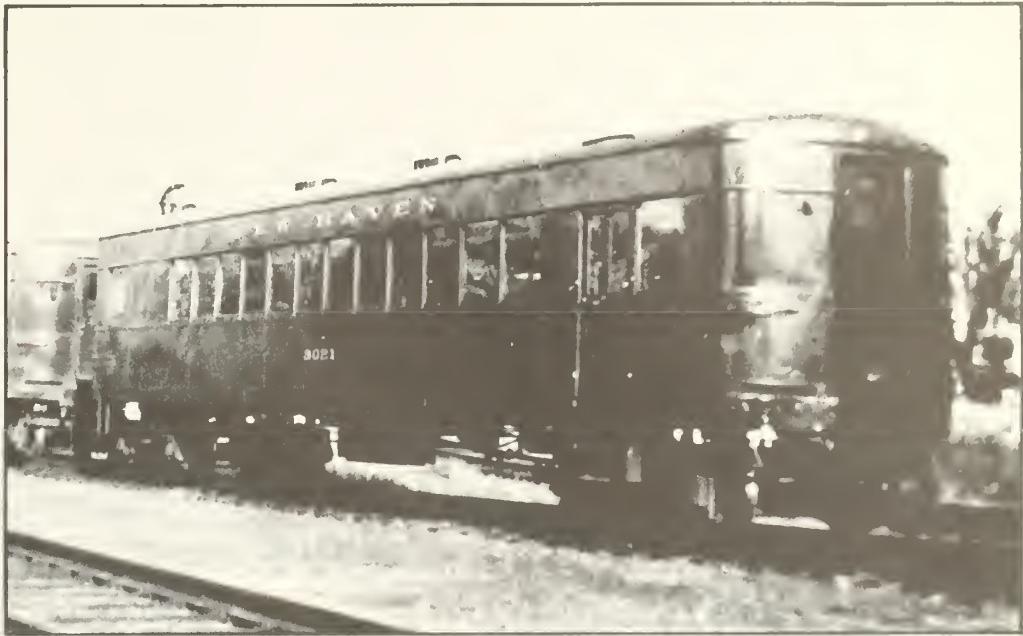
POST WAR SERVICE CURTAILMENTS

Shortly after the conclusion of World War II, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad resumed its program of eliminating deficit or marginal operations.

The first known attempt to discontinue service between Canton Junction and North Easton occurred with a September 1947 petition filed with the State Public Utilities Commission. The petition to dis-

continue passenger service over the 7.8 miles of track between Canton Junction and North Easton would deprive residents of Canton, Stoughton and North Easton of through rail service. Such an abandonment would force the closing of Canton, Stoughton and North Easton Stations. The New Haven maintained that it was losing \$72,000 a year on the branch.¹

#9021, shown here at Canton Junction during December 1940, was one of several "defrocked" gas cars converted for use as trailers in the declining years of gas car usage by the New Haven. Car 9021 carried a Sterling marine under a protruding hood, in her salad days as a self propelled car, #9021 lost not only her distinctive "snout", but her former mechanical drive trucks which were replaced by trucks from former electric cars used on the Nantasket Branch of the New Haven. Photo date: December 1940. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Though three stations served on the Stoughton Branch still stand, the North Easton station was the most attractive because of its lovely rural setting and distinctive architecture having been designed by Henry Hobson Richardson. Brill Car 9105 built in 1926 was a regularly assigned car on the 7.8 mile run between Canton Junction and North Easton. Photo date: May 1948. Photo by Kent Cochrane, Collection of T.J. McNamara.

CROSSING GATES REMOVAL

The revival of a second issue with the railroad in the fall of 1947 was the New Haven Railroad's plan to remove the crossing tender who operated the gates at the Washington Street crossing. They were to be replaced by a set of flashing lights and warning bell. The local resi-

dents were outraged, and the bitterness toward the railroad reached a new high. The Canton Board of Selectmen, while strongly opposing the discontinuance of passenger service, felt that if the New Haven succeeded in that attempt and removed the crossing gates, perhaps they should also discontinue their freight service as well and take their tracks out completely.²

No two issues could evoke such emotion from the local townspeople. Fifty years ago the town had waged and lost that bitter struggle to eliminate the grade crossing at Washington Street; now they were faced with yet another attempt by the railroad to reduce its service as well as the crossing protection. The two issues fused and ignited the town's leadership, as can be demonstrated in this

report of a public hearing held on the crossing gates removal.

Protest Removal of Crossing Gates at Public Hearing

At the public hearing held by the State Department of Public Utilities at their hearing room in the State House last Tuesday morning on petition of the Canton Board of Selectmen protesting the removal of the gates at the railroad crossing, the town was well represented....

All speakers stressed how dangerous the crossing would be for the hundreds of children who daily use it on their way to school, church, the Library, the Town Hall and the New Playground.

Police Chief Whitty explained how the terrific rate of speed maintained by the gasoline engine going through the crossing is most dangerous, and how, often times, freights go through the crossing after seven-thirty in the

evening, when no one swings a lantern or gives any other protection for motorists and pedestrians alike.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the commission took the matter under advisement.³

Canton clearly had made its position and feelings clear to the Department of Public Utilities. Passenger service on the branch had received a three-month reprieve while the Department of Public Utilities survey was to be made. The rail-

The Tower SS - 178



Above: Train #188. The Pilgrim due at Canton Junction at 3:39 pm from Providence with a DL-109 passes the Tower which will be torn down within a year. Photo date: September 17, 1947. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. In the 1930's and 1940's Carlton Parker took many pictures of the Canton Junction area. Some of the most informative and dramatic photos were taken from the tower at Canton Junction. The height above the rail afforded him great opportunity for spectacular photography. It was only natural that he would in turn photograph the men who worked as operators at the Tower at Canton Junction at their work. Photo date: circa 1945. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Right: Train #6 the Bunker Hill for Boston is framed by the operator in the Canton Junction tower. Photo date: October 29, 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

road countered with an announcement in late February 1948 that established the date of October 1, 1948 as the end of passenger service on the branch.

The town was dealt a major setback on March 26, 1948, when the Department of Public Utilities dismissed Canton's protest of the gate removal at the Washington Street crossing. The DPU cited the good visibility, low speed, and few trains as reasons for dismissing Canton's protest.⁴

The flashing warning lights and warning bell were installed and became operational at the Washington Street crossing on June 24, 1948. The town's disgruntlement was demonstrated to Massachusetts Governor Robert F. Bradford that summer while he was in Canton, and the railroad agreed to install additional lights at the crossing and to reduce the unnecessary whistling by the engines as they approached the crossing.

THE CLOSING OF CANTON STATION

Passenger service on the branch managed to remain, and the October 1, 1948 date came and went without the New Haven receiving permission to end service.

The fate of Canton Station was another matter, as the railroad removed the agent in February of 1949, thus effectively closing the Canton Station after almost a hun-

Right: Excellent photograph of switch levers and interlocking mechanism and track diagram board at upper right corner. Photo date: July 4, 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.
Lower Right: The operator's corner of the tower with an old time operator working this particular Saturday in July long ago. Although the calendar on the wall indicates the year is 1947, the desk equipment and gentleman pose for a timeless photograph. Photo date: July 26, 1947. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.





Above: The Comet headed toward Providence as an F & M Bus Company (Foxboro-Mansfield) bus waits at the station. Photo date: October 4, 1941. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Right: Not all the local branch line service was handled by gas-electrics as indicated by this I-1 Pacific #1004 waiting to depart. Photo date: February 1948. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark. Below Right: Changing trains at Canton Junction will be a thing of the past in two years and so will I-5 Hudson 1404, Brill Gas Electric 9105 and even Canton Tower. But Parker, with his sense of history, provides us with this not so long ago but far away photograph. Photo date: October 18, 1947. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.



dred and four years of service to the town. This fine old building was to remain standing for the next ten years, serving a variety of tenants, be they Knights of Columbus or Ed Duffy and Peter Flynn selling Christmas trees in an early demonstration of their business acumen.

JUNCTION PARKING LOT

The Canton Planning Board and Chamber of Commerce began urging the railroad to develop the parking lot at Canton Junction. June of 1949 saw the railroad removing the old turntable at the Junction and filling in the pit. The spare track also was removed, opening up greater space for parking. This relieved the problem of cars lining Sherman Street due to inadequate off-street parking space at Canton Junction. It was further hoped that the lot would soon be paved. This wish wasn't to be granted until almost a quarter of a century later, when, during the summer of 1973, the Canton Junction parking lot was paved.



SUMMARY

As with every decade, the 1940's saw continued change. The Dutch Elm disease was found for the first time in Canton in August of 1948 on Sherman Street. The tree on Sherman Street would be the first of hundreds of elms to die.

The whistle which blew each night at the 8:50 p.m curfew at the Canton Fire Station on Bolivar Street had its time changed to 12 noon.

Disappearing quietly in the late 1940's was the signal tower at Canton Junction, which was removed in response to the diminished traffic on the branch.

FOOTNOTES

¹Canton Journal, September 26, 1947.

²Canton Journal, October 3, 1947.

³Canton Journal, December 19, 1947.

⁴Full text of DPU statement can be found in appendix.



Alco DL 109 #709, was one of the ten original Diesel freight-passenger road locomotives purchased in 1941. This versatile locomotive was also dependable and powerful. Used in pairs, each unit had 2,000 hp which allowed for great speed for passenger runs and plenty of power for freight traffic. Photo date: July 26, 1947. Photo by Carlton Parker, Collection of Norton D. Clark.

A Canton Junction Album The 40's

Photos by Kent Cochrane —
Collection of T.J. McNamara



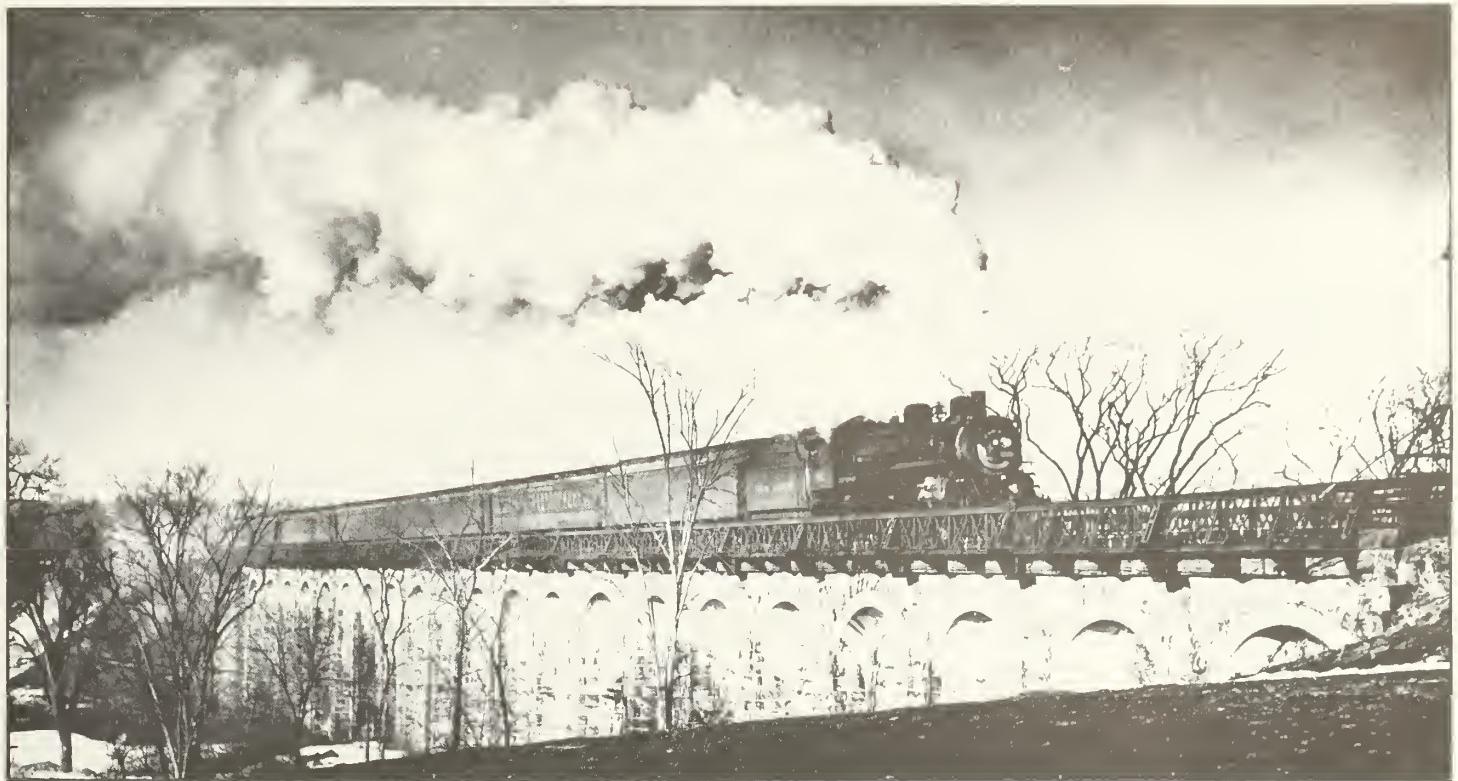
Local Freight service on the branch was performed by K-1 Moguls which were built just after the turn of the century. Here, a three car freight departs Canton Junction heading for Canton. 1948.



Number 9108 was one of a few gas-electrics left in service in February of 1948.

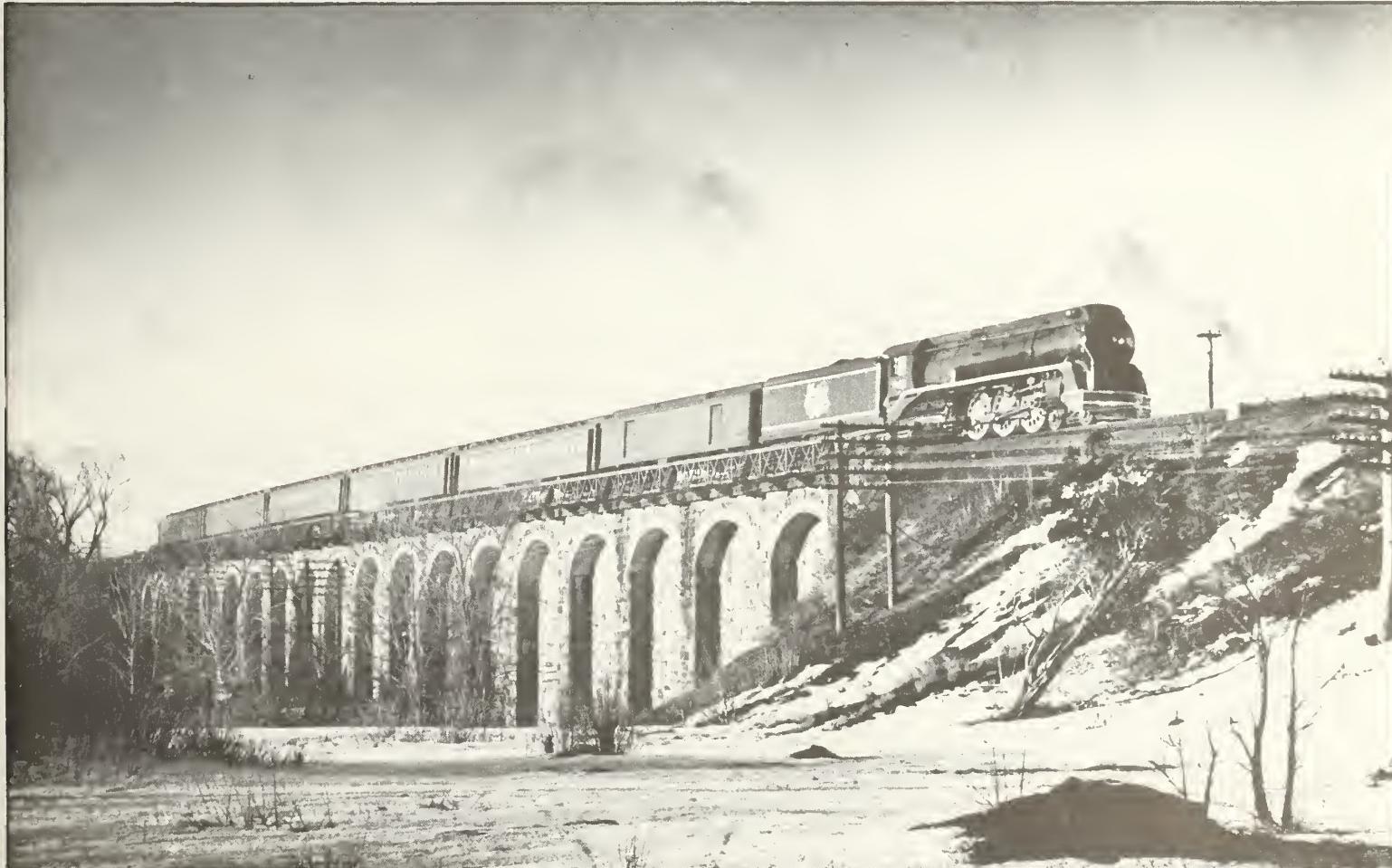
The cold can make for a dramatic photo if the camera is in the hands of someone as accomplished as the late Kent Cochrane. The location is to the north of the Chapman Street Bridge. Photo date: 1948.





Light Pacifics such as I-1 #1003 were the workhorse of local train service although almost 50 years old. This is a Providence bound local. January, 1948.

The streamlined Hudson #1402, with its huge tender with the New Haven script herald, has just been overhauled at the Readville Shops and was assigned this local train from Providence as a shakedown run. February, 1948.







Above Left: New Haven Railroads most modern steam engine I-5 Hudsons built 1937, had relatively brief careers due to the roads early dieselization. Here, a New York train thunders past Canton Junction. Photo date: 1948.

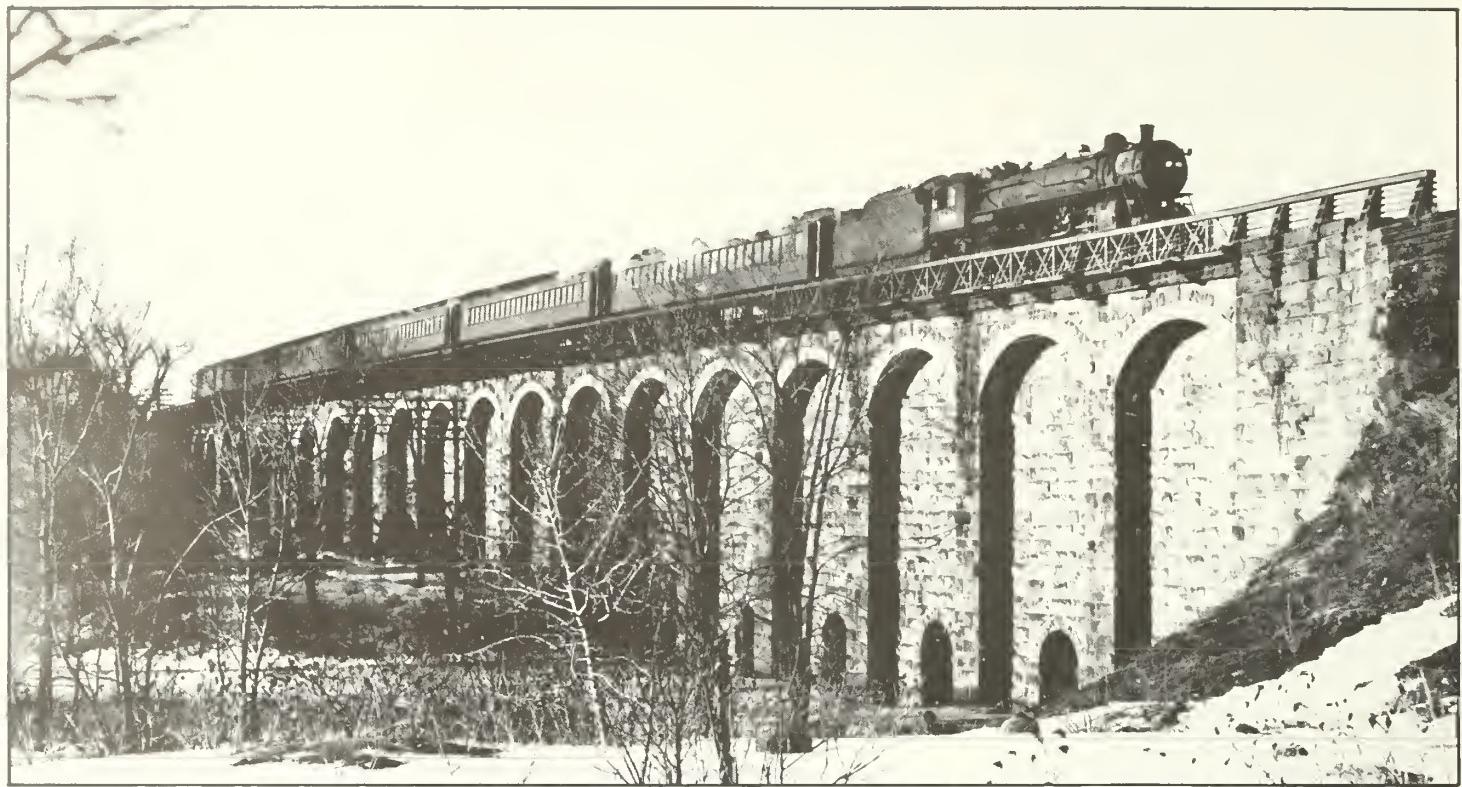
Left: An afternoon local leaves Canton Junction for Boston having just passed under the Spaulding Street Bridge, powered by Pacific #1350. Photo date: January 1948.



Above: A Providence local leaving Canton Junction behind Pacific #1329. Photo date: February 1948.

Right: The engineer is watching the photographer carefully as he approaches the edge of the Viaduct with Pacific #1361.





The 1-2 Pacific #1326 was 34 years old when it was photographed in lowly local service between Providence and Boston on the Canton Viaduct. Photo date: 1947.

New Haven Mogul #365 leaving Canton Junction with a local on the branch, tower is in the background. Photo date: 1947.



Canton Junction



The Merchants Limited, Canton Junction, July, 1950. Photo collection N.H.R.H.T.A., Inc.

Chapter Eleven CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS — 1950-1977

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- 1950 Through trains on branch eliminate long-time need to change trains at Canton Junction — September 24
 - 1953 Plans for a new railroad station at the junction of new Route 128 and the railroad — February
Second vehicular arch opened in Viaduct — March
 - 1959 Canton Station torn down — April
Passenger service cut back on branch from North Easton to Stoughton
 - 1960 Groveton Paper Company builds spur at Springdale
 - 1966 Last car delivered to Russell Coal Spur
 - 1967 Tracks torn up south of Easton
 - 1968 Worst derailment in history of New Haven — December 15
 - 1969 Penn Central acquires New Haven — January 1
James Ferrera & Sons builds new spur, Springdale — February
Space Makers builds new spur, Springdale — September
 - 1971 Russell Coal Spur and trestle are removed
 - 1972 I.T.T. Grinell builds new spur between Canton Junction and Route 128 Station
 - 1973 Penn Central sells nearly all of the Old Boston and Providence Railroad to MBTA — January 26
Deane Coal Shed and trestle torn down 1886-1973
Canton Junction parking lot paved
New England Installation builds new spur, Springdale — December
 - 1974 Canton Station Freight Shed destroyed by fire (August, 1891-August, 1974) — August 14
 - 1976 Penn Central becomes a part of the Consolidated Rail Corp., Conrail — April 1
 - 1977 Conrail ends passenger service — March 13
Boston & Maine Corp. begins passenger service — March 15



Above: A late view of the train for New Bedford leaving the main line for the branch offers a good view of Alco DL-109 #702. Photo date Circa 1950. Collection of NHRHTA Inc. Below: FM C-Liner with train at Canton Junction in the early fifties. Collection of NHRHTA Inc.

The modern history of the railroad in Canton began in the early 1950's. The last gasps of the passing order were visible, followed by the slow slide toward the New Haven's bankruptcy and final disappearance via absorption into Penn Central.

The nineteen-fifties brought about one last effort toward upgrading the railroad physical plant and rolling stock, not to mention uplifting the sagging morale of its employees.

F.C. "Buck" Dumaine, President of the New Haven, in the early 1950's made a serious attempt to put the railroad back in the passenger business. Saturday trains did disappear briefly from the branch on June 24, 1950, only to reappear in 1953 during what was to be a genuine flourish of new trains and sparkling new, self-propelled Budd cars.

Beginning on September 24, 1950, through trains began operating between Boston and New Bedford via the Stoughton branch instead of Mansfield, with the exception of Saturday.

This change of train service brought to an end the need to change trains at Canton Junction. No longer would passen-

gers on the branch need to cross the platform on the west end of Canton Junction Station. The basic operations of the Stoughton branch have seen little change since these moves of 1950.

There was the temporary loss of an industry on the branch when, in April of

1950, the Springdale Finishing Company ceased operation. Improved rail service included having the New York-bound "Quaker" stop at Canton Junction at 12:12 a.m., and finally, a year later in January of 1953, the resumption of Saturday trains on the branch.





A SECOND ARCH FOR VIADUCT

Since the latter end of the last century, the public had been appealing to political leaders, as well as to the railroad, to widen the existing arch or install a second arch where Neponset Street passed under the viaduct. The growth of truck and automobile traffic had turned the viaduct and its singular vehicular arch into a

bottleneck. In 1952, plans were developed to open a second arch. The projected costs were \$40,000, with the town and railroad sharing expense. Canton voted its \$20,000 in early 1952, and the work was completed in 1953. The second vehicular opening altered the symmetry of the structure for the first time, as the 1953 arch was lower than the original arch and was lined with concrete. "Progress" had exacted its first toll from the venerable stone and mortar.

This is how the single arch appeared with a year of its being joined by a second opening. Photo date August 1952. Collection of Author. Below: A photo of what could be described as the beginning of the "modern" era. The switch tower is gone, yard tracks reduced, cars now park where the gas electric waited for its passengers, and a diesel switcher does the work on the branch. Photo date Circa 1950. Collection of New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association.

NEW ROUTE 128 STATION

In an expansive mood, the New Haven's management announced plans in February of 1953 for a new railroad station at the junction of the new Route 128 and its tracks. The geography of the Neponset River Valley is such that the towns of Canton, Dedham and Westwood all felt that the new station would be within its boundaries. The location of the new station was to be Westwood. The only hope Canton had to share in this new, exciting development was to have some of the peripheral developments, such as warehousing, locate on the Canton side of the river.

Passenger service on the branch was cut back from North Easton to Stoughton in 1959. The pattern of two morning and evening passenger trains on weekdays, with a single morning and late afternoon train on Saturday was established — all known as the "Stoughton Local." The Stoughton Local stopped at Route 128,





Above: Westbound passenger train approaching Canton Junction in the early fifties. Photo by Ben F. Cutler. Left: New Haven PA-1 (NH Class DER-3a) #0783 and companion lead a westbound train at Canton Junction in the early fifties. Photo Ben F. Cutler. Below: Canton Station awaiting demolition which would occur in 1959. Photo date October 1949. Photo by Carl Smith, Author's Collection.

Canton Junction, Canton and Stoughton. The earlier of the two locals had been made up of conventional equipment, that is, a locomotive and standard coaches. The later of the locals was made up of self-propelled Budd cars. It was during the 1960's that a specific and distinctive locomotive, #526, was assigned to the "first" Stoughton Local. More will be said later regarding this locomotive.

RAZING OF CANTON STATION

In April of 1959, almost eighty years after its construction, Canton Station was torn down by J.J. Duane Company. Other than the viaduct, it was the town's only link with the Boston and Providence Railroad, which had built it in 1880. The building's passing caused little concern; it had been virtually abandoned by the railroad ten years earlier. It was, however, a well constructed, grotesquely handsome piece of Victorian architecture. Though



Top "The Daniel Webster" (better known to New Haven employees as one of the "Tin Trains" speeds away across Canton Viaduct. Styling and press hype could not salvage this McGinnis disaster." "The Daniel Webster" and the "John Quincy Adams" for all the New Haven millions wasted by Pat McGinnis were total failures. Of the three lightweight trains built for the New Haven, only the "Roger Williams" (Budd cars with a cab on each end) was successful. New Haven R.R. Photos. Collection N.H.R.H.T.A., Inc. Above Local BX-7 coming onto main line at Canton Junction with General Electric U25B #2510. Photo date October 23, 1968. Photo by Paul MacDonald.

only thirteen years older than Canton Junction, it reflected not only different architectural but also different corporate styles. One of Canton's few architectural treasures was hauled off in a truck to be used for fill. A corrugated metal shed was erected to provide shelter for commuters, but it was soon vandalized and rendered useless.

NEW INDUSTRIAL SPUR ON BRANCH

All was not bleak, as the former Springdale Finishing Company buildings had been put back into use as a warehouse and distribution center for Groveton Paper Company. A steep industrial spur

was built in 1960 to serve Groveton and its affiliate, Mainco School Supply.

FINAL NEW HAVEN BANKRUPTCY

In 1961 the railroad declared bankruptcy for the second time, a move which was to eventually lead to its being absorbed



Left: Train #811 the "1st" Stoughton Local at the Junction. 526 was the last regularly used RS-3 in passenger service handling two round trips a day between Boston and Stoughton. Photo date March 1968. Photo by Author.

into the Penn Central. The New Haven's first bankruptcy, which had lasted from 1935 until 1947, had left the New Haven in relatively good shape financially. The completion of the interstate highways, combining with air service that was becoming more dependable and faster, led to the final financial collapse of the legendary New York, New Haven and Hartford

Railroad. Overnight truck delivery within most of New England and one-hour flights between Boston and New York were clear signals that the New Haven and, indeed, the entire industry were in trouble.

BRANCH BECOMES A DEAD END

In 1967 the tracks south of Easton to Whittenton Junction were removed, thus breaking the rail link between Canton and southeastern Massachusetts. The route of the Fall River Boat Train had been severed.

DERRAILMENTS

With all the various accidents on the viaduct involving humans or animals, there is no evidence or indication that any car or locomotive has ever toppled from the viaduct to the street or river below. This is either the result of engineering or fate, as several accidents — some of them severe — have taken place just north of the viaduct, usually between Canton Junction Station and the Chapman Street Bridge, which is only 1300 feet away. In February of 1963, the "Federal" from Washington roared across the

With constant shortages of power it was possible to see Freight locomotives handling suburban passenger runs on occasion. Here, U25-B #2516 is deadheading the Stoughton local off the branch and back on the main line to Boston. Photo date 1968. Photo by Author.



viaduct with the last passenger car's trailing wheels on the ground, kicking up stone ballast and smashing wooden platforms and windows at Canton Junction Station. Again, there was a freight derailment in June of 1965, under the Chapman Street Bridge. Most recent was the

massive freight derailment of December 15, 1968, just north of the Chapman Street Bridge, where forty cars wedged themselves in the cut at right angles to the track. Thirty of the cars were contained within an area of 75 yards, which indicates the stacking effect of the accident.

The main line of the New Haven was closed to traffic through this point for six days, eleven hours and twenty-eight minutes.

Sunday, December 15, 1968 was the date of the worst derailment in the history of the New Haven Railroad, according to

Below: The majority of the derailed cars were totally demolished along with their contents. The staggering derailment would have proved to be a financial disaster for any corporation; let alone a company that had been in bankruptcy for years and was only two weeks away from being absorbed into the Penn Central Corporation. Photo date December 21, 1968. Photo by Author. **Bottom Left:** As a result of the derailment, trains were detoured resulting in an operational mistake that caused the collision of two trains in Walpole Yard. This head-on collision demolished Locomotive #526 which had been regularly used for years on the Stoughton local. Photo date December 22, 1968. Photo by Author. **Bottom Right:** Canton Junction Yard handled those cars removed from the west end of the derailment scene and was the area where crippled cars were stored. Lading was transferred. The Canton Junction office became the focal point for railroad officials directing the rerailing operation. Photo date December 22, 1968. Photo by Author.





a railroad spokesman. At 5:15 p.m. a New Haven Railroad freight train "OB-4," a Maybrook, New York to Boston train, derailed 40 cars approximately 500 yards east of Canton Junction. The train had a total of 77 cars, 22 of which remained upright and on the rail on the head end, while 15 were intact on the rear.

At the point where the derailment occurred, the road bed is depressed in a 35-foot cut, with a width of approximately 40 feet. Therefore, when 30 of the 40 derailed cars became lodged at right angles to the track, a solid wall of rolling stock developed.





Above left: One of the first trains to run to Canton following the December 1968 derailment was Budd Car #37. Photo date December 22, 1968. Photo by Author. Left: CB-2 "The Jet" from Cedar Hill about to pass Dedham Street Bridge. Photo date March 14, 1968. Photo by Paul MacDonald. Top: Despite its many financial problems, the New Haven was required to maintain a high frequency of New York to Boston trains. Here, Train #33, the Sundown, a pathetic version of the grand trains of the past, rumbles through the Junction at 6:30 P.M. with two cars. Photo date July 1968. Photo by Author. Above: The New Haven's last few years saw GE-25B and Alco Centurys handling fast freights such as BN-1, a Boston to Cedar Hill run. This photo was taken standing where Canton Tower used to be. Photo date 1968. Photo by Author. Below: The "Merchants Limited" #27 passes over Canton Viaduct on August 11, 1968. Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.

Work crews were called, and at one time a total of 200 men were working to clear the wreck. All were New Haven employees, save one talented crane operator borrowed from the Boston and Maine Railroad later in the week, when exhaustion began to develop in the New Haven crews.

Cranes from New Haven, Providence, and Boston were called to the scene and were viewed by hundreds of spectators, who lined Chapman Street Bridge as well as the right of way. All passenger — and a majority of freight — traffic was





detoured via Mansfield, Walpole and Norwood Central. A few important freights were sent from New Haven to Springfield, then Penn Central to Framingham, where they were switched back to the New Haven tracks and headed for Walpole, Readville and Boston.

It was one of these freights headed for Boston that collided in Walpole with another train, causing serious injury to four crewmen and the destruction of a locomotive on Tuesday, December 17 at 4:45 p.m. The Boston crane had to be moved from the Canton derailment, pulled back

to Readville, and sent to Walpole to rerail several units and cars.

Ironically, the engine that was struck and destroyed by the through freight in Walpole was known to Canton residents as the familiar orange and black Alco Roadswitcher #526, which had been the

Above: New Haven Train #170 the Colonial on the Viaduct. Photo date September 7, 1968. Photo by Author. **Below:** The paint says New Haven but the FL-9 has been given Penn Central #5008 as it leads #3, the Manhattan, past the Junction. Photo date June 1, 1969. Photo by Author.



Right: After having been covered over for 18 years, the New Haven block lettering logo re-emerged in 1986. The Amtrak work train in background was used to replace rail and ties on Viaduct. Photo date November 1986. Photo by Author.

Below: Modern commuter equipment powered by an MBTA F-40. This Stoughton Local is about to stop at Canton Junction late Saturday afternoon November 27, 1986. Photo by Author.



Boston And Maine Exit

Labor disputes on the Maine Central Railroad which is owned by Guilford Transportation Industries who also own the Boston and Maine resulted in commuter service disruptions in the Spring of 1986 on lines to the North and West of Boston. The MBTA found such service interruptions intolerable and awarded the contract for the operation of its commuter rail lines to Amtrak effective January 1, 1987.

This move is one of consolidation as Amtrak had, of course, been operating the high speed intercity service. In addition, Amtrak had been performing all of the dispatching duties which include authorizing the occupancy and use of tracks by its own through trains, as well as, Conrail freight, Commuter Rail and various maintenance crews.



This Providence Local is powered by a locomotive lettered Penn Central, but looks are misleading. This photo was taken in November 1977 when this service was being operated by the Boston and Maine Corporation for the MBTA. Photo by Author.

EPILOGUE 1977-1987

In recent years the pace of change has quickened. The single most important component of such change is money or the lack thereof. A summary of the players and events will assist the reader in following just how each part of the railroad puzzle as of 1987 fits together.

As stated earlier, the MBTA now owns the real estate, right of way and related structures. The MBTA contracted the Boston and Maine Corporation to operate its South side operation in 1976 following Conrail's withdrawal from providing such service. This move consolidated the B&M's role as the operator of all greater Boston's commuter rail lines. Amtrak, for its part, saw to it that the main line was upgraded to provide for a smoother ride at faster speeds. This activity was funded as a part of the Northeast Corridor Improvements Project. This work was done over a period of time beginning in 1979. The most visible change was the installation of concrete ties and welded rail

making possible an eighty mile an hour speed limit for Amtrak trains as they passed by Canton Junction.

It is interesting to note, however, that the time-tested wooden ties are still used on the Viaduct and were replaced in the fall of 1986 with crews working several Sundays to accomplish this work.

The increase in speed concerned the townspeople and resulted in a system of warning bells and flashing lights being installed at the Junction to warn of approaching trains. In addition, a fence was placed between the East and West bound tracks for safety purposes.

The yard trackage was also diminished as the need for industrial switching was reduced to serving but a single customer—Cumberland Farms. Cumberland Farms takes delivery of a covered hopper of plastic pellets on the average of once a month. Truck loads of the pellets are taken to the Cumberland Farms milk processing facility located on Dedham Street

where they are melted down to make plastic milk containers.

Freight Service On Stoughton Branch

Freight service on the Stoughton Branch now consists of one major and one minor customer. The major customer is Coheno Lumber in Stoughton. On each Tuesday and Thursday, seven or eight cars of lumber are delivered to their warehouse. The other customer is James Ferrera and Sons who operate a food warehouse which currently receives two cars a week. This warehouse is in the Springdale section of Canton. The Plymouth Rubber Company, the oldest shipper on the Branch, has recently stopped shipping after a long decline in its use of rail freight.

The wayfreight serving the Branch is operated by Conrail from its Readville yard. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday this same Conrail crew is servicing its freight customers on the Franklin Branch.



engine on the first Stoughton Local each morning and night for many years. This particular engine was of distinctive appearance and was the last of its type in passenger service on the New Haven Railroad. Were it not for the Canton derailment, #526 would have been waiting

at the Dover Street yards in Boston with its aged passenger coaches to make its afternoon run to Canton Junction, Canton and Stoughton.

The work of clearing the derailment in Canton dragged on around the clock, with the impossible terrain and danger-

ous tank cars hampering any quick chance to clear the right of way. The last car was removed on Saturday night, December 21. Track 1 was opened at 3:15 a.m., Sunday, December 22; and Track 2 at 4:00 a.m. The first train through was #3, "The Owl", at 4:43 a.m., Sunday.

Above: The Stoughton local at Canton Junction. For years this "2nd" local (No. 802) made up of 3 to 4 self propelled Budd cars left Stoughton at 8:05 a.m. with stops at Canton (8:10), Canton Junction (8:14), then non-stop to Back Bay (8:35) and South Station (8:40). Photo date 1969. Photo by Author. Below: GP-9 dual purpose locomotives were used in commuter service for years. Here, an ex-New Haven GP-9 renumbered Penn Central #7535 stops at Junction with the Stoughton Local. Photo date 1969. Photo by Author.



The mainline was opened after being closed for six days, eleven hours and twenty-eight minutes. This was the longest period of time the mainline had been out of service, due to an accident, in the recorded history of the railroad in this area. The cause and cost of the derailment have yet to be determined. Freight service on the Stoughton branch was disrupted from December 13 to December 23.

PENN CENTRAL — NEW OWNERS

It was as if the weary New Haven had saved its most horrendous event for the grand finale. The New Haven ceased to exist as a separate operating entity on midnight, December 31, 1968. The terms under which the New York Central and Pennsylvania Railroads were allowed to merge called for the New Haven's inclusion as of January 1, 1969.

The long-troubled New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad yesterday became a part of the Penn Central, the world's largest investor-owned railroad.

The Penn Central and New Haven signed the final 200 documents Tuesday afternoon. It was a reluctant act by the Penn Central. The New Ha-



Above: Freight from Readville to Stoughton and return ran on a three day a week basis in the early 1970's. Here a Penn Central (ex New Haven) GP-9 switches Canton Junction yard on a rainy afternoon. Photo date June 1969. Photo by Author. Right: Another corporate owner, the Penn Central with an E-8 leading a New York bound train over the Viaduct. Photo date 1971. Photo by Herbert H. Harwood. Below: Following the same route of the Comet was the Pratt & Whitney Turbo of the late 1960's and early 70's—its turbine power took it whistling past the Junction. Photo date 1971. Photo by Author.





Budd Car in Penn Central "high visibility" colors at Junction. Photo date 1971. Photo by Author.

ven, in bankruptcy proceedings for the past 7½ years, has incurred losses ranging between \$10.8 million and \$19.5 million a year in the past 10 years.

But under an Interstate Commerce Commission order, upheld by two Federal courts, the New Haven now has become a member of the Penn

Central system. It adds about 1,500 miles of track to the 20,000 miles operated by the Penn Central in the northeast quadrant of the U.S.

The New Haven will be operated as the New Haven Region of the Penn Central. The operations will be headed by William H. Tucker, who was named vice president, New Eng-

land, of Penn Central. His office will be in Boston, where he was born and educated. Mr. Tucker was a commissioner of the ICC when the agency approved the merger of the Pennsylvania and New York Central Railroads, laying down the condition that the Penn Central (which finally was formed in February 1968) should buy the distraught New Haven.

Mr. Tucker, whose ICC term expired at the end of 1967, joined the Penn Central as vice president, corporate administration, on September 1, 1968.

Penn Central paid 950,000 of its common shares, \$33.6 million in its first mortgage bonds and \$8 million in cash for the New Haven. At the closing Tuesday, Penn Central paid over \$3 million in cash rather than \$8

CANTON JUNCTION STATION THE 70's





Above: "The Southern Crescent" #172 at Canton Junction, MA, on April 23, 1978. Photo by Richard A. Fleischer. Above right: Amtrak's "The Sundown" #185 at Canton Junction, MA, on April 23, 1978. Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.

million, as the Penn Central has agreed to assume responsibility for \$5 million in vacation pay due New Haven employees. And of the \$3 million in cash, \$985,000 was immediately returned by the New Haven to the Penn Central for a freight bill it owed the Penn Central.

Considering certain New Haven bond obligations, pension costs and other expenses taken over by the Penn Central, the purchase will cost the Penn Central about \$178 million. New Haven bondholders are continuing a court action to win a higher price.

The interior of Canton Junction Station, virtually unchanged since its construction in 1893.

Canton Junction Station with Freight House in background. One of the most enduring fixtures has been the venerable Ash tree that sits in the parking lot. Photo date 1975. Photo by Author.



Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.



The successor New Haven concern plans to become a management investment company that will issue new securities to creditors. It will have a large tax-loss carry-forward. The names of the new company, its five directors and prospective officers weren't immediately announced.¹

NEW INDUSTRY ON RAIL

The 1970's have seen several new industries locate in Canton. In the Spring-

dale area, there have been three new industrial sidetracks installed.

James Ferrera & Sons, a wholesale food warehouse and distributor, began receiving rail shipments in February 1969.

Space Makers, Inc., modular houses, began receiving shipments in September 1969.

New England Insulation began receiving shipments in December 1973.

In contrast to this clustering of industry in the Springdale area, a single new

industrial sidetrack has been built almost midway between Canton Junction and Route 128 Station. Grinnell Corporation built a facility in Canton in 1972 that included both manufacturing and warehousing. A main line turnout, a long industrial spur and drill track were constructed.

A complex network of rail has been laid in the Route 128 Station area. The dreams of Buck Dumaine were to be realized, as more than a dozen companies located warehouse and distribution facilities, the

Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.





Amtrak Turbo Train (United Aircraft) #151 "The Flying Yankee Passes" Canton Junction westbound on March 16, 1975. Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.

majority of which are rail-served, on the floor of the Neponset River flood plain.

NEW OWNERSHIP

The Penn Central itself slid into a bankruptcy of its own in June of 1971. This fact prompted the Penn Central to sell some of its right of way and "fixed plant" (bridges, land, buildings, etc.) in Massachusetts to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) in January of 1973. Included in the sale was virtually all the former Boston and Providence Railroad; therefore, all of the railroad facilities in Canton had yet another owner.

Public ownership of the railroad facilities had not been an overnight decision. The traffic-choked roads of eastern Massachusetts gave clear signals to planners and politicians alike that they must prepare for future transportation needs, and what better solution than the underutilized and neglected rail system.

The first visible federal government involvement in the area was the creation of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, better known as AMTRAK, which came into being on May 1, 1971. Amtrak operates numerous trains daily between Boston, New York and further points.

MAJOR CHANGES

The MBTA, in its first summer of ownership, accomplished the long overdue task of paving over the parking lot at Can-

ton Junction.

That same summer of 1973 also saw the removal of yet another Canton railroad landmark, as the Deane Coal Shed and trestle were removed. Built in 1886, when the B&P was still operating, the shed had spanned five ownerships of the railroad. Unused for many years due to an unsafe trestle, it was the last coal shed remaining in Canton. Russell's coal shed had been removed in 1971 and the track torn up.

The last vestige of the once-busy Canton Station area was destroyed by fire on August 14, 1974. The Canton Station freight shed, which had been built in August 1891, burned to the ground in the early morning hours. The building had seen little use during its last years. The Plymouth Rubber Company periodically used it for storage. It had been several years since a rail car had been unloaded at its doors.

While the MBTA purchased the right of way and other real estate in 1973, it was not in any position to operate rail services. Penn Central retained a transportation easement for the operation of its freight service and Amtrak service. Amtrak, as an interested party to the Penn Central's sale of its "east end" property to the MBTA, was assured of future operating and scheduling rights.

These agreements continued with the inclusion of Penn Central into the Con-

solidated Rail Corporation, Conrail, on April 1, 1976. Conrail, made up of several bankrupt Northeast railroads, is backed financially by the federal government in its attempt to organize itself into a viable operation.

One of the steps taken by Conrail was to free itself of marginal activities, such as providing commuter passenger service under contract to the MBTA. Farebox revenue from the commuter service failed to cover costs of the service, but commuter operations were perceived by public agencies to be an essential public service. Conrail, however, wanted out, and in early 1977 indicated that they would cease to operate on March 13, 1977. And stop they did — on March 12, 1977. There was a one-day suspension of all service on Monday, March 14.

With the loss of passenger service, the political wheels were spinning. The Boston and Maine Corporation, which had been operating passenger service for the MBTA to the north and west of Boston, technically began operating what they called their "south side" passenger service on March 15, 1977. Needless to say, there was considerable confusion with the change of passenger service. The B&M, in effect, could not step in overnight and resume service, so they made an interim agreement whereby Conrail actually provided the service until July 1, 1977.



Amtrak's "The Merchants Limited" #179 on Canton Viaduct W.B., April 23, 1978. Photo by Richard A. Fleischer.



December 16, 1968, the day after the derailment of 40 freight cars just east of Canton Junction. Photo collection of Author.



Stoughton Local pulling into Canton Center. The MBTA's new name for the Canton Station. Photo date November 22, 1986. Photo by Author.

Local Commuter Service

The low ebb of commuter service in terms of frequency of service, as well as, the condition of the passenger coaches occurred during the early 1970's.

The Penn Central, mired in its own massive problems, assigned ancient Pennsylvania Railroad coaches to the Stoughton Branch service. This equipment was hopelessly obsolete and was plagued with frequent failures of both light and heat. Help was on the way, however, as the construction of additional expressways was spurned and mass transit recognized as a vital part of a com-

prehensive transportation system for greater Boston.

From near extinction in the late 1950's and 60's, commuter rail is currently enjoying a virtual renaissance. A third Stoughton inbound train was added in July of 1975. New rolling stock and motive power began to arrive in quantity in the late 1970's. In addition to the new push-pull pullman standard coaches and new locomotives, supporting facilities were being expanded and transformed. Extensive rail bed improvements were made in 1980 and 1984 with the installation of new ballast and ties along the entire Stoughton Branch.

During the 1970's as a result of the increase in service, the parking area at Canton Junction was more than tripled and paved. This was followed in 1984 with the paving of Canton Station parking lot and construction of a passenger shelter and a ramp for the handicapped.

The reconstruction of the Southeast expressway which began in April of 1984 resulted in the number of trips from Stoughton being increased to ten and a half round trips in an effort to encourage commuting by rail rather than using the overburdened expressway.



On its return from Stoughton the train is controlled from the opposite end. Passing the new Canton Center passenger shelter. Photo date November 22, 1986. Photo by Author.

Right: Spaulding Street bridge built in 1888 and scheduled to be demolished in 1987. In its time it carried not only pedestrians and vehicles, but at the turn of the century the electric trolley cars of the Blue Hill Street Railway. Photo date November 1986. Photo by Author.

Below left: Spaulding Street bridge provided a safe means to cross the tracks, as well as, an excellent location to photograph the Canton Junction area. The Chapman Street bridge with its famous truss can be seen in the background. Photo date November 1986. Photo by Author.



Chapman Street bridge built in 1888 replaced the wooden Hunniwell bridge, here it is pictured being dismantled. Photo date November 1986. Photo by Author.



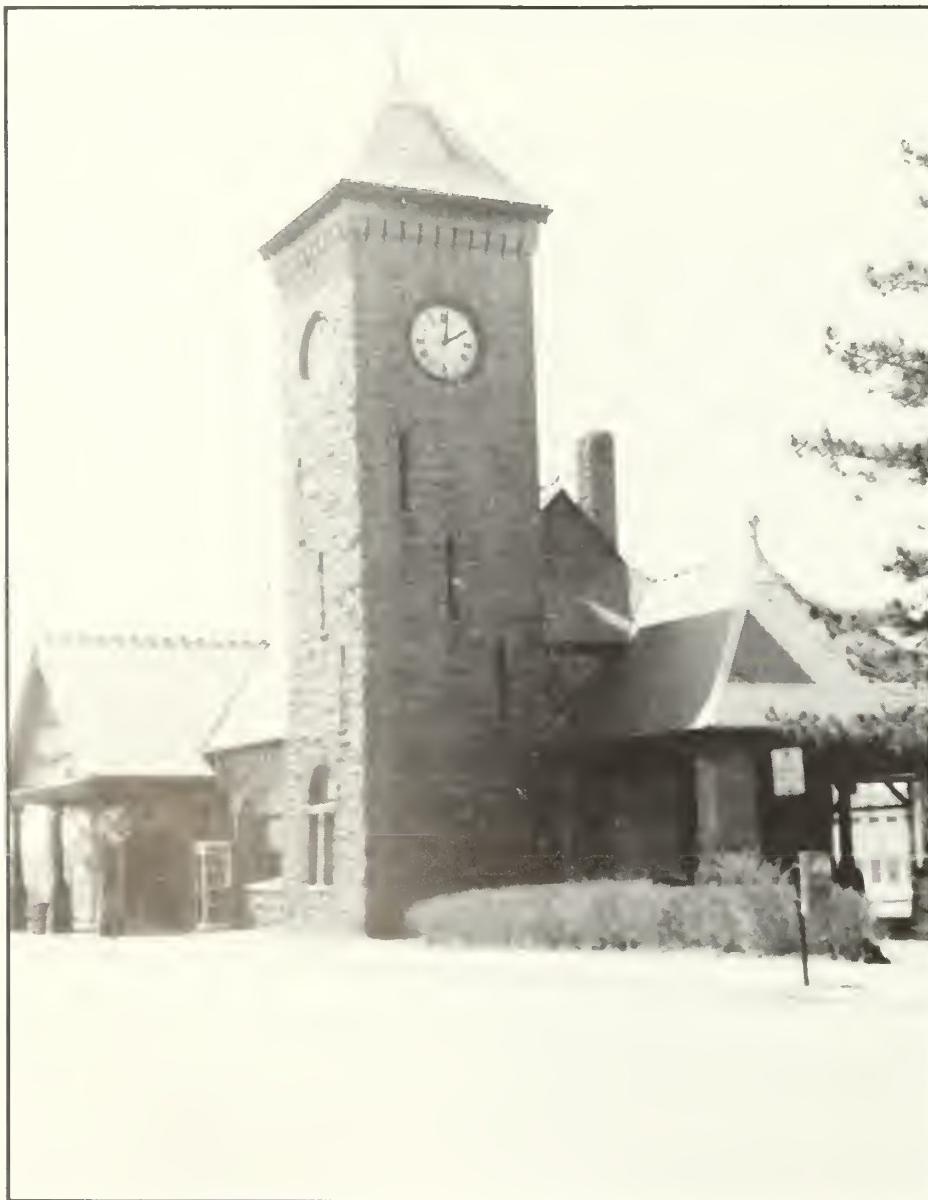
Fifty-eight years separate these two views of Canton Junction. The 1928 photo was taken at the height of the Railroad's development. By 1986 the only freight customer at the Junction was Cumberland Farms who took delivery of covered hopper cars of plastic pellets. The Amtrak work train occupies one of the remaining yard tracks. 1928 photo by Carlton Parker. Collection of Norton D. Clark. 1986 photo by Author.

The Stoughton Branch A Survivor

The fact that the Stoughton Branch has survived at all is the result of its early ownership by the Boston and Providence Railroad. The B & P owned the Canton Junction to Stoughton portion of the Branch where it connected with the Old Colony Railroad. The famous 1959 abandonment of the Old Colony commuter service did not include the Canton Junction to Stoughton segment although all of the trackage was owned by the New Haven.

When the era of MBTA subsidies began in earnest in 1966, it did not include any money for the New Haven's operation of the Stoughton service because the New Haven lacked the authority to discontinue service. Gradually, however, the MBTA had to act to protect the service. First by funding trains between Boston and Canton Center in 1973 and finally with the arrival of Conrail all former Boston and Providence service areas.

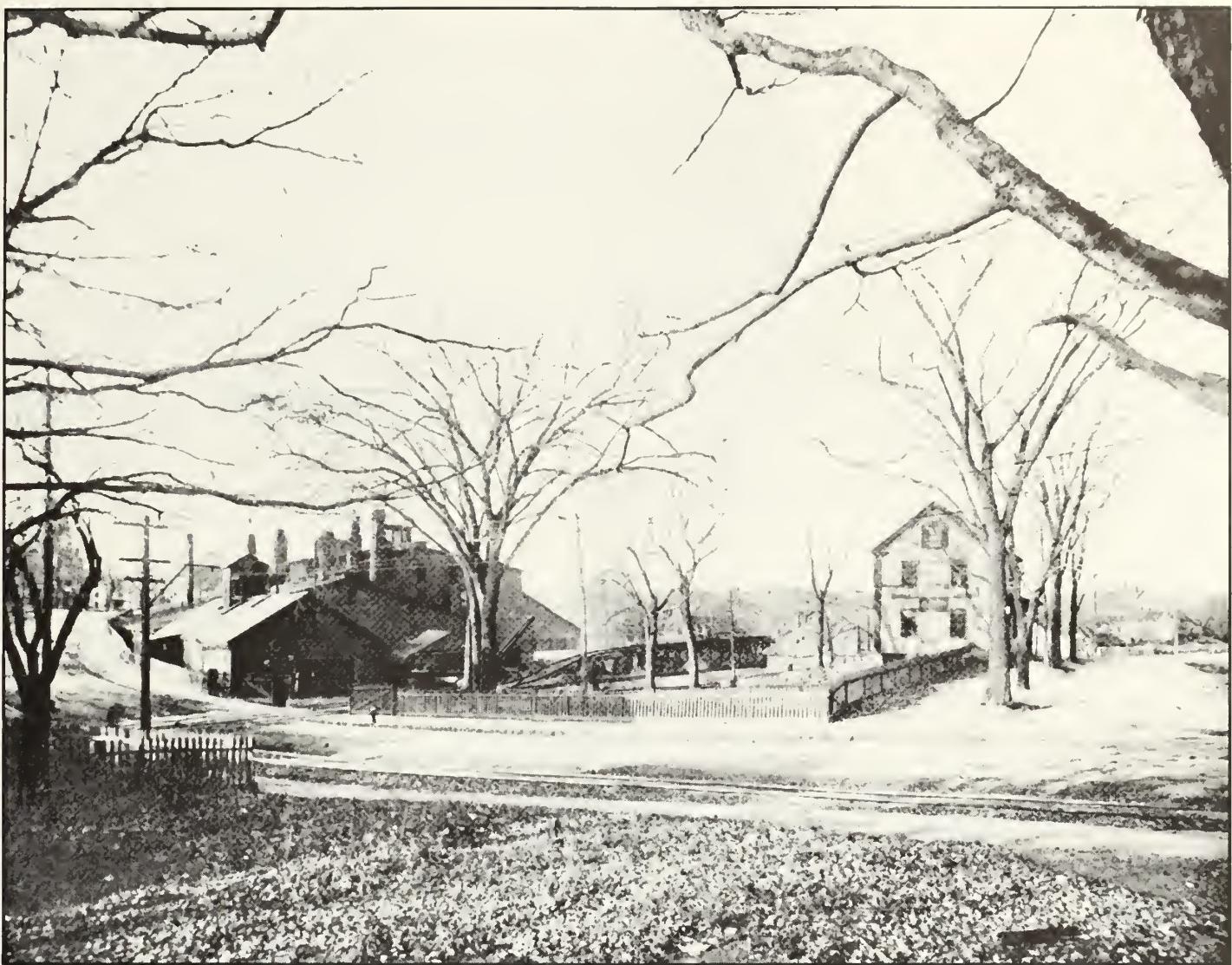
This financial tangle underlies in part the stagnant service and deplorable equipment of the early 1970's.



Top left: Brill Car 9112 hauling trailing car 9021 stopping at Stoughton Station. Photo date March 1942. Photo by Carl Smith. Collection of Author.

Left: Stoughton Station, 3.9 miles from Canton Junction. Photo date 1968. Photo by Carl Smith. Collection of Author.

OTHER AREA PHOTOS



Looking across Washington Street at Kinsley Iron and Machine Company. This mill provided many items used in the rail industry from track spikes to wheels and axles.

The tracks in the foreground are those of the Blue Hill Street Railway. Canton Center is to the far right.

The KIM tracks not only crossed Washington Street but had a switch in the middle of the street allowing one track to feed into two tracks. The building at the left is the Machine Shop with its Wheel House appearing behind the telephone pole. The Rolling Mill looms in the background.

Canton Movie Theater which has had several names over the years—Oriental, Strand, Orpheum—is located on the site of the Machine Shop. The trestle is clearly visible in the center and the office of the Kinsley Iron and Machine Co. is on the right. The street on the extreme right was known for years as Copper Yard Lane, later changed to Revere Street. Photo date 1908. Collection of Author.

A view of Canton Station in October 1949 shortly after it was closed. Collection of Author.



West Stoughton Station located 2.9 miles from Canton Junction Circa 1915. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Sharon Heights Station Circa 1910. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



West Stoughton Trolley Stop, Blue Hill Street Railway. Circa 1918. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



Above: Easton Station, located 9.9 miles from Canton Junction. Photo date September 6, 1914. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.

Right: Easton crossing tenders shack. Photo date December 31, 1930. Photo by Louis Homer Benton, collection of Norton D. Clark.

Below: South Easton, on the line that ran from Easton to Matfield Circa 1914. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.





North Stoughton Station on the Randolph Branch, 5.5 miles from North Easton. Circa 1920. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.



633 South Stoughton R.R. Station

South Stoughton Station on the Randolph Branch, 3.6 miles from North Easton. Circa 1915. Photo by Louis Homer Benton. Collection of Norton D. Clark.

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